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Processing Manual for Archival and Manuscript Collections

Meghan Bailey

University of Massachusetts Boston, meghan.bailey@umb.edu

Jessica R. Holden

University of Massachusetts Boston, jessica.holden@umb.edu

Joanne Riley

University of Massachusetts Boston, joanne.riley@umb.edu

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Processing Manual for Archival and Manuscript Collections

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey Library
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125
617.287.5469

<http://openarchives.umb.edu>
library.archives@umb.edu



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Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION	4
A. Mission.....	4
B. Purpose.....	4
II. THE SURVEY AND PROCESSING PLAN	5
A. Processing Steps Overview	5
B. Survey	6
C. Writing the Processing Plan	7
III. ARRANGEMENT.....	8
A. Introduction	8
B. Series and Subseries	9
C. Arrangement Levels	9
D. Container List.....	12
E. Rehousing.....	13
F. Removal and Separation of Items	13
G. Separation Form Instructions.....	15
H. Oversize Materials	15
I. Books and Periodicals	16
J. Audiovisual Materials	17
K. Digital Media	19
L. Sensitive Information	20
M. Folder Headings and Dates.....	21
N. Preservation	22
O. Conservation	24
IV. DESCRIPTION.....	26
V. FINAL STEPS	27
VI. SUGGESTED RESOURCES.....	27
VII. APPENDICES	29
A. Processing Checklist.....	29
B. Finding Aid Template	30
C. Finding Aid Sample.....	32
D. Processing Plan Form.....	36

E. Separation Form..... 39

F. Inventory Template..... 40

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Mission

The University of Massachusetts Boston is a public research university with a dynamic culture of teaching and learning, and a special commitment to urban and global engagement. Our vibrant, multi-cultural educational environment encourages our broadly diverse campus community to thrive and succeed. Our distinguished scholarship, dedicated teaching, and engaged public service are mutually reinforcing, creating new knowledge while serving the public good of our city, our commonwealth, our nation, and our world.

(Source: http://www.umb.edu/the_university/mission_values)

The mission and history of the University of Massachusetts Boston guide the collection policies of University Archives and Special Collections, which reflect the university's urban mission and strong support of community service.

University Archives constitutes the official records, publications, and photographs of the University of Massachusetts Boston, including materials documenting its preceding institutions, the Boston Normal School and Boston State College.

Special Collections includes collections that reflect the university's urban mission and strong support of community service, and contains records of urban planning, social welfare organizations, social action and alternative movements, community organizations, war and its social consequences, the history of bicycling, and local history related to neighboring communities, including Dorchester and the Boston Harbor Islands. Also included in the department's Special Collections is a selection of rare and special books.

To carry out its mission, University Archives and Special Collections is committed to working with, promoting, and assisting community archives in the Greater Boston area through facilitating cross-organization collaboration and access to informational, educational, and practical resources relevant to archival procedures and best practices. Current community archiving programs and projects include the [Mass. Memories Road Show](#), the [Massachusetts Hip-Hop Archive](#), and the [Boston Police Strike Project](#).

B. Purpose

This manual is intended to be used as a training guide for graduate-level interns, volunteers, and professional archivists new to working in University Archives and Special Collections (UASC). It is also intended to bring consistent practices to UASC and to serve as a reference source for staff. Version 1.0 was developed and tested by Processing Archivist Meghan Bailey and Archival Reference and Processing Librarian Jessica Holden under the supervision of University Archivist Joanne Riley. The manual will be reviewed annually and on an as-needed basis by the processing archivist in consultation with the reference archivist.

Portions of this manual were adapted from:

- University of California Systemwide Libraries, [Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries \(Version 3.2\)](#)
- [Houghton Library Manuscript Section Processing Manual, May 23, 2017](#)
- Special Collections & Archives, Wright State University Libraries: [Processing Manual](#)
- University of Maryland Libraries: [Processing Manual for Archival and Manuscript Collections](#)
- Special Collections Library, University of Texas at Arlington: [Archives and Manuscripts Processing Manual](#)
- PACSCL Hidden Collections Processing Project, 2009-2012: [Surveying and Minimal Processing Manual](#)

II. THE SURVEY AND PROCESSING PLAN

A. Processing Steps Overview

The processing supervisor will assign the processor a collection. If the collection does not have a collection number, consult with the processing supervisor, who will assign one. Follow the steps below to process the collection.

1. **Survey the collection:** Locate all accessions, gather basic information about the collection, and create a preliminary inventory.
2. **Write a processing plan:** Determine the level at which the collection will be processed, and meet with the processing supervisor for discussion and approval.
3. **Process the collection:** Using the preliminary inventory as a reference, arrange, rehouse, and create a container list for the collection.
4. **Complete processing:** Once processing is complete, share the finding aid with the processing supervisor for review. When the finding aid is approved, add the final folder numbers and box numbers to the container list in the finding aid. Add the folder numbers to the physical folders.
5. **Create box labels:** Consult with the processing supervisor to create box labels, which are generated from a departmental database. Adhere the labels to the boxes.
6. **Email final finding aid** to processing supervisor as both a Word document and a PDF.
7. **Shelve the collection:** Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with shelving the collection.
8. **Post the finding aid online:** Consult with the processing supervisor to publish the finding aid online.

Promote the collection: Write a blog post announcing research access to the newly-processed collection, highlighting a few interesting and important aspects of the collection. Include images

in the blog post, e.g. scanned photographs or visually interesting documents, or a photograph of the physical collection in its processed state.

B. Survey

Survey the collection for the general subject content, formats of material, any preexisting arrangement, condition, preservation needs, and rehousing needs. Work on the survey should take no longer than a day. Take notes for the scope and content note in your finding aid draft. Surveying the collection includes the following actions.

1. **Gather information** about the provenance and subject(s) of the collection. Sources of information may include the processing supervisor, the UASC department's administrative collection file, official websites, and published sources. Take short and relevant notes for the biographical note and/or historical note in the finding aid draft. Record important dates, functions, names, and significant events.
2. **Identify the original order** of the material, or lack thereof. This is the order of the records established by the creator of the collection. This may include distinct record groups or series. *Do not rearrange any of the material when doing your initial review of the contents of the box.*
3. **Create preliminary inventory:** If a preliminary inventory was created when the collection was accessioned, double-check the list to ensure accuracy. If a preliminary inventory is not available, create one in Excel at the box level with a short and concise description of the contents. The processor should consider the following:
 - **Estimate the size in linear feet** of the collection. Is each box approximately one linear foot (i.e. the size of a standard record carton), or is it larger or smaller? Are all boxes full or will the collection reduce in size during processing?
 - **Note the formats** in the "contents" column of the preliminary inventory list. Does the collection primarily contain documents, photographs, or audiovisual material? Formats might include (but are not limited to):

○ Organizational records	○ Reports
○ Personal papers	○ Brochures, flyers, pamphlets
○ Correspondence	○ Books, booklets
○ Photographs, slides, negatives	○ Objects
○ Newspapers, magazines, clippings	○ Videos: Betamax, VHS, DVDs
○ Manuscripts	○ Audio: LPs, cassette tapes, 8-tracks, CDs
○ Maps, blueprints, architectural drawings	○ Digital media: thumb drives, CDs, DVDs
○ Artwork	

- **Save** the preliminary inventory list on the Processing Room computer (determine exact location with the processing supervisor) and update as the collection is being processed so that colleagues can determine the processing status and access if a researcher is interested in consulting the collection. The processor should keep the following columns up to date: **LOCATION** (whether Row:Bay:Shelf or text description; see chart below), **Processed Y/N?** and **Notes**. See below for a sample preliminary inventory list.

SAMPLE PRELIMINARY INVENTORY LIST:

Box #	Location	Container Title	Contents	Linear Feet	Notes	Processed ?
1	82:02:01	Program Director Files	Paper files	1		y
2	82:02:02	Program Director Files	Paper files	1	Mold do not process	n
3	Proc. Room, Back table	Minutes	Paper files, notes	.5		n
4	MB Office Table	Photos	Photos, notes	1		n

C. Writing the Processing Plan

Writing a processing plan will help determine the steps needed to process the collection, will save time, and will ensure consistency while processing. Using the information gathered during the survey will assist in this process. *Note that it is common for the processing plan to go through several revisions as you get to know the collection better.*

The processing plan, also known as a work plan, consists of the following:

- Accession number
- Collection title
- Creator name
- Date received
- Extent
- Current arrangement
- Proposed arrangement and level of arrangement
- Preservation issues
- Restrictions
- Current linear feet
- Projected linear feet (after removal of duplicates and sensitive material)

Ask the processing supervisor for the accession number and date received. The processing supervisor will also provide you with access to the department’s processing plan form. The format used for the collection title and creator name should be derived from *Describing Archives: Content Standard* (DACS) 2.3 and 2.6 (see: http://files.archivists.org/pubs/DACS2E-2013_v0315.pdf). The extent (i.e. collection size) will become clear during processing, and may

be added once processing is complete.

III. ARRANGEMENT

A. Introduction

After the processing plan has been written and approved, organize the collection into series, separating the materials into boxes with temporary box labels (such as sticky notes) to gain intellectual and physical control over the collection. Depending on the level of arrangement and the arrangement scheme, the processor can create a draft of the finding aid simultaneously while processing. Always take notes on the content of the collection, and/or photocopy documents for future use in the finding aid or as a quick resource to avoid looking for the information again.

Processors should take into consideration the principles of provenance and original order when establishing series and subseries. The following definitions from Richard Pearce-Moses's *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* were obtained online at the Society of American Archivists website: <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary>

Provenance: Information regarding the origins, custody, and ownership of an item or collection.

The processor should identify the person, people or entity that created the collection. This will assist in the creation of a title for the collection. Refer to DACS rule 2.3 for details on creating a title.

Original order: The organization and sequence of records established by the creator of the records.

Original order preserves the existing relationships of the records and provides meaning and context for researchers and gives intellectual control over the materials. Identify if the original order established by the creator is meaningful and useful to future users of the collection. It is possible some of the collection is in order while the rest lacks order. It is up to the processor to determine the best way to proceed based on the time and resources at hand. If it is determined that no original order exists, then the processor may impose an order that will be most useful for future researchers of the collection and will help with arrangement and description. If implementing minimal-level processing, the processor will want to spend a minimal amount of time necessary on arrangement that still provides users intellectual and physical access to the collection.

Arrangement: The process of organizing materials with respect to their provenance and original order, to protect their context and to achieve physical or intellectual control over the materials.

Arrangement establishes physical and/or intellectual control over the collection. Records can be arranged chronologically, alphabetically, by document type or theme – whatever makes best sense to the processor. If the folders are arranged chronologically, begin with the oldest date and end at the most recent date. (See *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts* by Kathleen D. Roe for detailed information on arrangement.)

B. Series and Subseries

To establish intellectual arrangement, start by arranging the materials into *series*. A series is “a group of similar records that are arranged according to a filing system and that are related as the result of being created, received, or used in the same activity” (SAA Glossary). A subseries is a series within a series. The following are typical examples of series arranged hierarchically:

Series I: Minutes, 1982-2005

Series II: By-Laws, 1979-2004

Series III: Correspondence, 1977-2005

Subseries i: General Correspondence, 1977-2001

Subseries ii: Correspondence on Board Members, 1982-2005

Series IV: Studies and Reports, 1972-2004

Tips:

- Series are not required in processing. However, large collections will benefit from series arrangement.
- It is often easiest to start with the largest series first. Organize series by hierarchy or importance, with the most important series first and the least important series last.
- Other common ways to establish series include: time frames, correspondence, organizational records, school records, formats, etc.
- Do not create an “Oversize” series.
- Keep arrangement simple and uncomplicated; do not overcomplicate the system of arrangement.
 - Subseries should be established only when necessary.
 - Do not create sub-subseries. They are not best practice, and they complicate a collection’s arrangement. If you find yourself creating sub-subseries, take a step back and review how the series list can be simplified.

C. Arrangement Levels

Arrangement levels define the depth and detail of processing work required for a collection. At University Archives and Special Collections, the level of processing is assessed for each collection based on research value, complexity, and incoming condition of that collection. Some collections may be described very broadly, using the title and preliminary inventory list as description, with little to no arrangement. Late twentieth-century business and organizational records, such as the records of the College of the Liberal Arts, which have a clear original system of arrangement, may need very little arrangement imposed by the processor.

Organizational, business, and academic department records are typically grouped hierarchically by series.

Listed below are the levels of arrangement used by University Archives and Special Collections.

Efficient Processing:

In March of 2019, University Archives and Special Collections embarked on the Finding Aids for All Project (FAFAP), an outgrowth of UASC's Efficient Processing (an initiative started during the fall of 2017) based on the *Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries* (<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1sw157j3>). The goal of this project is to make all collections (including unprocessed collections) accessible to researchers shortly after they have been accessioned, rather than waiting for the time and resources to process the collections in detail. FAFAP is broken into several phases. The first phase is to expose all archival holdings by creating a collection-level finding aid for all collections. The following phase entails creating finding aids for new accessions, reformatting legacy finding aids, and processing at lower levels as necessary. User-driven processing based on researchers' requests for access to unprocessed collections will determine processing priorities. The FAFAP project has been useful not only for exposing all of UASC's collections to researchers, but includes cleaning up old collection inventory records, merging records, and marking records for deletion. This added benefit is extremely helpful in the event that UASC decides to migrate from the Microsoft Access collections control database to ArchivesSpace or another collections management platform.

Minimal-Level Processing:

Review *Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries* (<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1sw157j3>) to become familiar with the concept of Efficient Processing. The UASC Processing Manual is based on these guidelines.

Review Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner's article "More Product Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing" (also referred to as MPLP, see: <http://www.archivists.org/prof-education/pre-readings/IMPLP/AA68.2.MeissnerGreene.pdf>) to become familiar with the concept of minimal-level processing which is a mindset rather than a fixed set of rules. MPLP involves analysis and decision-making to determine arrangement and description.

Minimal-level processing at UASC is a streamlined and time-efficient method for processing, and facilitates timely access to collections. The practice of minimal-level processing should be implemented whenever appropriate. Exceptions may be made for collections that require more in-depth processing, for example collections with little to no original order, collections with a high level of preservation concerns, collections with a high research value and expected use, or collections with privacy concerns. Consult with the processing supervisor if you are unsure of whether or not to use minimal-level processing.

Minimal-level processing tips:

- **Do not read every document.** Review folder titles and skim documents to get a sense of their content. Evaluate which collections are likely to have a high level of personally identifiable information (PII) or student records. For example, organizational collections may contain PII and faculty papers may hold student records. Scan for folders labelled “student papers,” “personnel,” “financial,” or folders labeled with a person’s name. Check for sensitive information such as checks, bank account numbers, Social Security numbers, personnel records, financial records, receipts and airline tickets with credit card numbers, and combinations of names, birth dates, and home addresses. (See section III. F)
- **Metal fasteners** (e.g. staples and paper clips): Remove ONLY when rusted or corroded.
- **Rubber bands:** Always remove.
- **Acidic (yellowing) documents:** Sandwich between two sheets of archival paper to protect other documents.
- **Newspapers clippings:** Do not photocopy, rather if another item like correspondence is next to it, place a sheet of archival paper between the two.
- **Photographs:** Place into archival polyester sleeves or sandwich between two pieces of archival paper.

For removal and rehousing of items that require preservation attention, see section E. Rehousing.

Collection-Level Processing:

- **Arrangement:** No physical arrangement if materials are easily identifiable and the folder labels are clear. If original order has been lost, boxes may be placed in rough order.
- **Description:** Finding aid meets DACS single-level added value, and may contain a listing of boxes and their general contents.
- **Preservation and Housing:** The contents will be reboxed. Folders may be reused. Rehouse materials in binders and hanging folders in archival folders. Rehouse loose items.
- **Appraisal:** No appraisal. If privacy is a concern, restrict entire collection or applicable series and review for users on demand.

Box-Level Processing:

- **Arrangement:** Little to no arrangement if materials are easily identifiable. When original order has been lost, arrange boxes by series.
- A series can be subdivided into a subseries but never a sub-subseries.
- Arrange series hierarchically based on function, leaving media and ephemera at the end of the series list if possible.
- **Description:** Create a brief box-level description and a brief finding aid that meets DACS multilevel description.
- **Preservation and Housing:** Rebox contents and keep materials in original folders when possible. Collection materials can be refoldered if they are unusable in their current condition. Rehouse materials in binders and hanging folders in archival folders. Rehouse loose items.

- Appraisal: Appraise at the folder level. Avoid detailed weeding. Segregate folders or entire series that have privacy concerns from the rest of the collection.

Folder-Level Processing:

- Arrangement: Arrange folders by series and impose a new order if the original order is lost. Sort loose items into folders. Keep folder contents in their original order.
- Description: Create a detailed finding aid that meets DACS multilevel description and includes series/subseries descriptions and a folder inventory with DACS-compliant folder titles.
- Preservation and Housing: Rehouse boxes and folders, address fragile items, and separate media for temperature-controlled storage.
- Appraisal: Item-level weeding as appropriate. Segregate items with privacy concerns from the rest of the collection.

Item-Level Processing:

- This level should be used in rare instances when the collection requires a very high level of security or a high need for access and retrieval.
- Item-level processing may also be used if the collection is small or does not have an original order.
- This level is often used for born-digital collections. See the [Mass. Memories Road Show Project Handbook](#) for an example of UASC’s digital preservation workflow.

Born-Digital Processing

- Born-digital processing and digital preservation practices are not addressed in this manual. The workflows for digital processing are dealt with on a case-by-case basis. See the [Mass. Memories Road Show Project Handbook](#) for an example of UASC’s digital preservation workflow.

D. Container List

To facilitate access to the collection, the processor may choose to create a container list on either the box level or folder level, depending on the size of the collection. When creating a box-level container list, list the box number, box title, and contents.

The level of detail used in the container list is at the discretion of the processor. Larger, more uniform collections (e.g. forty record cartons of organizational records spanning 1985-2000) will likely require less detailed container lists than smaller, more complex collections (e.g. two record cartons of personal papers from the early twentieth century).

SAMPLE BOX-LEVEL CONTAINER LIST:

Box #	Box Title	Location Note	Dates
1	Director’s Records		1975-1986
1	Publicity Records	oversize,	1980, 1986
2	Photographs	cold storage,	1982-1988

SAMPLE FOLDER-LEVEL CONTAINER LIST:

Box #	Folder #	Folder Title	Location Note	Dates
1	1	Correspondence for funding,		1973-1977
1	2	Correspondence with clients,		1978-1984
1	3	Audio visual materials	media storage,	circa 1980-1985

E. Rehousing

Rehousing will vary depending on the arrangement level for the collection. See section C. Arrangement Levels for details. When rehousing documents, contents should be removed from their original folders and placed into archival folders that are folded out to match the depth of the contents. Use folder sizes consistently within boxes; that is, do not mix legal- and letter-size folders within a box. When using legal-size folders, make sure that there are enough folders to fill a box. See section III.H for other options.

Record folder titles exactly as they were written on the original folders. If the processor chooses to add more information to the title, use brackets [] to distinguish between original wording and the processor's added wording. Any writing on the original folder (other than the title) should be photocopied. Place the photocopy inside the archival folder on top of the folder's contents. Consider reviewing the [Anti-Racist Description Resources](#) created by Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia. This paper addresses "anti-oppressive terms, concepts, and norms in order to deconstruct the white supremacist values that permeate American society, and by extension, the archival field" (page 1 of *Anti-Racist Description Resources*).

- Maintain the original order of the folders' contents.
- Clearly print folder titles so that they are easily legible.
- Place folders into archival boxes, typically record cartons or document cases. Consult with the processing supervisor regarding archival containers of other sizes. Use temporary labels, such as sticky notes, until processing is finished.
- Retain the original cases for all media formats.
- Use archival paper sleeves for floppy disks and archival paper for any items that do not have cases.

F. Removal and Separation of Items

Photocopy onto acid-free archival paper and discard originals of the following.

- Carbon copies
- Mimeographs
- Faxes
- Ditto copies

Discard (or perhaps redact) the following items after checking with the processing supervisor.*

- Receipts (which often contain credit card numbers)
- Checks
- Financial records

*Financial records are not kept by the archives unless the archivist has determined them relevant to potential researchers.

Other items that should be removed are as follows:

- **Post-it or sticky notes:** If the note has writing on it, photocopy the note on the paper and then place the photocopy on top of the document from which the note came. Discard the sticky note since the adhesive and paper are acidic. Discard blank notes.
- **Metal fasteners** (e.g. staples and paper clips): When conducting minimal-level processing, remove ONLY when rusted or corroded. In each case after staples are removed, fold a piece of archival paper in half and place around the documents to indicate they were once stapled and remain together.
- **Rubber bands:** Always remove.
- **Fragile, faded, or acidic documents:** Sandwich between two sheets of archival paper. The text of faded fax paper can be made readable by scanning the document and adjusting the contrast and/or darkness in a photo editing program.
- **Newspaper clippings:** Do not photocopy. Place archival paper between the clippings and other documents. Do not interleaf the clippings themselves with archival paper.
- **Fragile and/or damaged photographs:** Place into archival polyester sleeves, or sandwich between two sheets of archival paper. (For removal and rehousing of items, see section III.G below.)
- **Folder titles:** Retain original folder titles. If additional information needs to be added, use brackets [].
- **Moldy items:** Students, interns, and volunteers should never handle moldy items, but should alert the processing supervisor immediately if they encounter mold. When in doubt, contact the supervisor. The supervisor will place any moldy items in a plastic garbage bag. Make a note in the preliminary inventory.
- **Media:** Remove items for media storage and replace each item with a separation form and create a copy of the separation form to store with the removed item. See Appendix E.
- **Envelopes:** Discard unless there is information on the envelopes not documented elsewhere. For envelopes with extensive handwriting, photocopy on archival paper.

- **Duplicates:** Discard or offer back to donor depending on the donor agreement. Keep two copies of important documents. Toss or shred duplicates if they contain sensitive information. Please refer to UASC’s Book Policy for duplicate publications.
- **Conservation:** Please refer to section O. Conservation. Generally, items in need of conservation can either be flagged with acid-free paper or removed and replaced with a separation form. Consult with the processing supervisor and See Appendix E.
- **Sensitive material:** Items removed for security purposes that are not discarded are replaced with a separation form. See section III.L Sensitive Information and Appendix E for separation form.

G. Separation Form Instructions

Sometimes materials need to be physically removed (separated) from their proper location in the collection for special storage, treatment, exhibits, or restricted access. The usual method is to leave an explanatory “separation sheet” in the original location that explains where and why the item was moved and place a copy of the separation form with the item in its new location. When processing, keep the separated material and the eventual placeholder together. Add the original folder title to the placeholder folder, as well as the reason for separation in brackets (for example: “[restricted]”). Move the folders to be separated to their new location after all processing has been completed and leave the placeholder folder in the original location.

H. Oversize Materials

Typical oversize materials include but are not limited to: maps, blueprints, posters, and flyers.

Folders with *one* oversize item:

If a folder contains only one or a small number of oversize items, remove these items to an oversize folder. Place a separation form(s) (see Appendix E) in the original folder in the place from which the oversize item came. Make sure that the new folder title describes the content. It does not need to match the folder from which the item came. The container list does not need a note since not all content is oversize. The separation form will stand in as a note and the new folder title will be added to the bottom of the form.

If using letter-size folders for an entire collection, you may be able to house some oversize items in legal-size folders. Remove the oversize items and place them in a legal size folder in a separate record carton labeled “oversize.” Write this location on the separation. The container list does not need a note since not all content is oversize. The separation form will stand in as a note.

Folder content that is *all* oversize:

If an entire box or folder contains oversize materials, create a surrogate folder to stand in place of the removed folder and place a separation form (see Appendix E) within the surrogate folder.

This will keep the numbering of the folders consistent. Maintain the intellectual arrangement within the finding aid and write “oversize” in the Location Note.

For materials that do not fit in letter or legal size folders, the processor can use large oversize folders that fit in flat file drawers. Write the folder title on the bottom left corner of the oversize folder with the opening of the folder facing you. Writing the folder title in this spot makes identification of the folder and its contents easier. Maintain the intellectual arrangement of the folders within the finding aid and write “oversize” in the Location Note. Create a surrogate folder to stand in place of the removed folder and place a separation form (see Appendix E) within the surrogate folder. This will keep the numbering of the folders consistent.

NOTE: *The folder title on the oversize folder must match the title of the surrogate folder.*

Tips:

- Maintain the intellectual arrangement of the folders within the finding aid and write “oversize” in the Location Note.
- Do not mix legal and letter size folders within the same box.
- Write the folder title on oversize folders on the bottom left corner with the opening of the folder facing you. This makes it easier to identify folders and content in the flat file drawer.

I. Books and Periodicals

Please review UASC’s Book Policy for detailed information concerning publications that are kept in the collection, cataloged for Special Collections, or deaccessioned. For single books that were used for research and have annotations, retain the intellectual arrangement of the material within the finding aid and place a separation form (see Appendix E) in the item’s folder or create a surrogate folder. Items will be given to the cataloging librarian to add to the library collection if deemed appropriate. List the items in the container list to maintain the intellectual order using MLA style (see: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>). Format the date to be DACS-compliant. In brackets, list how the item can be accessed.

Example: Smith, John. *Bicycling Across the States* [Archives Stacks], 1984
Smith, John. *Bicycling Across the States* [Available at HathiTrust], 1984

For single periodicals or newspapers that were used and annotated by the creator, the processor can photocopy the relevant text on acid-free paper and discard the original. However, if there is a collection of these materials, do not photocopy. See processing supervisor for guidance.

Books and periodicals that have no research value or intellectual relation to the collection or series can be removed and offered to be returned to the donor. If the donor does not want the item back, check to see if it is in the current library collection. If not, offer the item to the cataloging librarian for addition to the collection. If it is already in the library collection, discard the item.

J. Audiovisual Materials

- Remove media items for media storage and replace with separation forms (See Appendix E).
- For collections with large numbers of audiovisual materials, separate the items by format and place them in the appropriate archival boxes for each format. Depending on the level of processing, create a series for each format or group them in a media series. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- When applying minimal-level processing, do not create an inventory of each item. Record the media in a box list and include the total number of each format in each box.
- For an item that resides in a folder, use a separation sheet in the folder from which the media came, and note the location in the container list. Create a new folder for the item using the same title and place a copy of the separation form in the folder. Place the foldered item in a box and store in climate-controlled storage.

The following is a list of different audiovisual materials and appropriate rehousing options.

Photographs

- For photographs that have anticipated high use or are dated prior to 1980, place in archival polyester or polypropylene photograph sleeves. Interleaf all other photographs with archival paper. Consult processing supervisor for guidance.
- If there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of photographs, create a photographs series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats. List photographs in the container list by their folder titles. If the photograph(s) came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.
- For further information on the preservation of photographs, see: Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn and Diane L. Vogt-O'Connor. *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. Print.

Negatives

- Place in archival polyester or polypropylene negative sleeves.
- If there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of negatives, create a negatives series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats. List negatives in the container list by the folder titles. If the negative(s) came

from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.

Slides

- Place in archival polyester or polypropylene slide pages.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of slides, create a slides series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats. List slides in the container list by the folder titles. If the slide(s) came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.

Film reels

- Wear nitrile gloves when working with reels.
- Identify the type of film at hand. Nitrate or cellulose acetate film in use from 1887 until approximately 1950 is flammable and should be separated from the rest of the collection. NOTE: If this film smells of vinegar (noxious odor), that indicates that deterioration is in process. *Notify the processing supervisor immediately.*
- Film should be stored flat in an archival box or should remain in its original canister, as long as the canister is not rusty.
- For a large number of reels, do not create an itemized list. List by group title and total number of items. However, if the title of each reel is important for researchers and their work, consider creating an itemized list. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of film reels, create a film reels series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats.
- See the National Film Preservation Foundation's *Film Preservation Guide* for more information: <http://www.filmpreservation.org/preservation-basics/the-film-preservation-guide>

VHS tapes

- Some VHS tapes have a tab for safe mode and record mode. Slide the tab to safe mode.
- Store vertically.
- Do not create an itemized list for a large number of tapes. List by group title and total number of items. However, if the title of each tape is important for researchers and their work, consider creating an itemized list. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of VHS tapes, create a VHS tapes series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats.

- To capture information from the VHS's case cover, photocopy the case. NOTE: Do not photocopy case covers with the VHS tape still inside the container. Remove the tape before photocopying the case cover.

Cassettes

- Keep cassettes in their original cases. Place any cassettes without original cases in archival cassette cases.
- When using minimal-level processing, do not create an itemized list. List cassettes by group title and the total number of items. However, if the title of each cassette is important for researchers and their work, consider creating an itemized list. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of cassettes, create a cassettes series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats.
- If the cassette(s) came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.
- To capture information from the cassette's case cover, photocopy the case. NOTE: Do not photocopy case covers with the cassette tape still inside the container. Remove the tape before photocopying the case cover.

K. Digital Media

Use a separation form (See Appendix E) in the folder from which the media came and note the media location in the container list. Store all formats vertically. DO NOT TRY TO PLAY MEDIA IN A COMPUTER HARD DRIVE. See the following format descriptions for specific instructions.

Floppy Disks

- Flip the tab up on the back of the 3.5-inch floppy disk to protect the item from being overwritten.
- Floppy disks may be stored in their original containers or in archival paper envelopes. Write with pencil on the outside of the envelope the collection number, series number, and title from the floppy disk, if available. For a large number of floppy disks, create small stacks, and tie each stack together with a bookbinder's knot and slip of paper indicating the collection number, series number, and title. Store the stacks of floppy disks in a small box.
- When using minimal-level processing, do not create an itemized list. List by group title and total number of items.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of disks, create a floppy disks series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats.
- If the disks came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.

CDs and DVDs

- Make sure that all items have cases. When using minimal-level processing, do not create an itemized list. List CDs/DVD/s by group title and total number of items. However, if the title of each CD/DVD is important for researchers and their work, consider creating an itemized list. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- If there is there is no original order and the collection consists of a large number of CDs and/or DVDs, create a CDs and/or DVDs series or media series if the collection contains multiple formats.
- If the media came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.

Memory cards, USB drives etc.

- Store these items in small archival envelopes with separation forms if necessary. Write with pencil on the outside of the envelope the collection number, series number, and title of item, if available. List items in the container list by format. If the media came from a folder that also contained documents, use a separation form. See Appendix E for the separation form.

You may decide to assign each item a unique sequential ID number in case the item gets separated from its box. Consult with the processing supervisor about this. Write the ID number on the enclosure and on the media itself. Use a CD/DVD pen. Write only on the clear inside hub of the disk.

L. Sensitive Information

Remove or redact any sensitive information such as credit card numbers, Social Security numbers, or combinations of identifying information such as names, addresses, and phone numbers. Receipts and plane tickets often include credit card information and should be removed. Depending on the document, you may redact information and create an access copy. File the original item in a restricted box or remove the item permanently, offering to return the item to the donor or shredding it. Do not redact the original document. Photocopy the original document and redact the access copy.

- **Consult the University Record Retention and Disposition Schedules** at the UMass Boston Records Retention webpage here: https://www.umb.edu/contracts_compliance/records_retention. Permanently remove financial records, student records, and receipts. Check with the processing supervisor, who may offer to return these items to the donor before shredding them.
- **Do not shred** university records. Any removal of these records should be discussed with the processing supervisor and offered to the donor/transferring department.

Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with handling sensitive information.

M. Folder Headings and Dates

Write folder headings in pencil and use sentence case (i.e., only capitalize the first word of the title and any proper nouns. This is also known as “down style.”). Record the heading in the container list exactly as it was written on the folder, including dates. If a folder title is created or added to by the processor, put the wording in brackets []. Folder titles should include the following elements:

- Collection number
- Collection title: Use the last name of the creator or name of the organization, or a sensible abbreviation.
- Series and subseries numbers, if applicable (series title does not need to be written out)
- Folder title
- Folder number: Number folders sequentially throughout the entire collection. Folder numbering should start over with each series and subseries, rather than run throughout the collection. E.g.: Series 1 contains folders 1-40, Series 2 contains folders 1-95, Series 3 contains folders 1-55, etc.

Folder title example:

Given the following information:

Collection number: SC-0136
Abbreviated collection title: O’Malley
Series number: II
Subseries number: i
Folder title: Equal citizenship for Northern Ireland, 1968
Folder number: 59

The folder title would look like this:

SC-0136	II. i	Equal citizenship for Northern Ireland, 1968	f. 59
O’Malley			

Dates

All dates must be DACS compliant. Refer to the latest edition of *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*, section 2.5. The following are examples of forms of dates used in DACS.

1934-1950
1962, 1975
1980
1982 March 17

1982 March
circa 1977

Important: If the date is unknown, determine the bulk date range of the materials or use the date range of the folders from the same box, whichever makes the most sense to the processor. Below are two examples.

circa 1980-1990
circa 1982-1987

The reasoning for estimating dates is that computers do not necessarily understand the term “undated.” If the date range is included, users have a better sense of how old the records are.

N. Preservation

Preservation is part of processing a collection. See sections III.F, III.H, III.I, III.J, and III.K for handling instructions for specific formats. General preservation guidelines are as follows:

- *Never do anything to a document that is not reversible.*
- **Paperclips and staples:** For minimal-level processing, remove and discard only when rusty.
- **Rubber bands:** Remove and discard.
- **Plastic folders:** Remove and discard.
- **Vinyl binders:** Remove and discard.
- **String or ribbon:** Remove and discard.
- **Notebooks:** Remove and discard metal or plastic spirals. Discard any acidic covers. Covers may be photocopied onto archival paper to retain any information. Discard blank pages. An exception may be made for items that can be used for display in an exhibit.
- **Acidic materials:** Interleaf with archival paper. Place archival paper on each side of an item that has any adhesives.
- **Folded or rolled materials:** If a paper document resists unfolding or unrolling, or is in danger of being damaged, do not force it open. Do not attempt to flatten rolled photographs. Flag for conservation and store separately, making a note in the container list.
- **Sticky notes:** Discard blank notes. If a sticky note contains information, photocopy the item on archival paper with the note on it. Place the copy on top of the original and discard the sticky note. The adhesive of the sticky note is acidic.
- **Scrapbooks:** Consult the processing supervisor for guidance as preservation treatment is made on a case-by-case basis. The following are options for the treatment of scrapbooks. Interleaf pages with archival paper as long as the scrapbook’s binding is strong enough. Create a conservation note in the collection record to indicate the item may be a candidate for digitization. If all items can be safely removed, photocopy the pages prior to removal to document the original order of the contents. Alternatively, the scrapbook may be digitized.

- **Damaged documents:** Do not tape or attempt to repair documents. Damaged documents can be placed in an archival sleeve or flagged for conservation. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.
- **Active mold:** Students should not handle mold. If you come across items that appear to have mold, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. The following tasks should not be carried out by students without supervision. *Wear a facemask and gloves prior to handling moldy items.* Materials with active mold or that are questionable should be placed in heavy-duty garbage bags labeled with the collection number, series number, and description of content if possible. Note the moldy materials in the container list and the scope and content note. Work with moldy materials away from the collections so as not to contaminate other materials.
- **Inactive mold:** Students should not handle mold. If you come across items that appear to have mold, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. The following tasks should not be carried out by students without supervision. Inactive mold is powdery. If the processor is certain that all mold is inactive, the materials can be taken outside and vacuumed using the Nilfisk vacuum with a HEPA filter. Place the items in a bag when transferring the materials outside. Wear a facemask and gloves. When vacuuming a document, do not use the brush attachment since the mold spores will collect in the brush. Use a lower level of suction, place a screen over the document, and vacuum the document until all the powder is gone. Always consult with the processing supervisor before handling moldy materials.
- **Evidence of insects, rodent droppings, fire or water damage, and red rot:** If you come across items that appear to have any of the above listed issues, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. Evidence of insects include casings, live or dead insects, and holes in paper. Evidence of water damage includes discoloration, spotting, and mold. Evidence of red rot is the powdery disintegration of leather binding on books. For resources and recommendations addressing these issues, see the Northeast Document Conservation Center's (NEDCC) website (<https://www.nedcc.org/>) or contact them directly for assistance.

Preservation Resources:

See the Northeast Document Conservation Center's (NEDCC) website for preservation leaflets: <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview>. The NEDCC is a useful resource for preservation concerns and advice. If a question arises that cannot be answered, consult with the NEDCC by emailing the appropriate contact. Another great resource for photographs is *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*, published by the Society of American Archivists. See section VI. Suggested Reading for more information on this resource.

O. Conservation

At this time University Archives and Special Collections does not have an in-house conservator. Do not attempt to conduct any treatment of items. For items with mold, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. To identify and sequester items with mold please see Identifying Mold and Handling Mold below.

The following definitions of conservation and treatment are taken from the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works' Definition of Conservation Terminology webpage. <http://www.conservation-us.org/about-conservation/definitions#.XECmi6Qvxyw>

Conservation: The profession devoted to the preservation of cultural property for the future. Conservation activities include examination, documentation, treatment, and preventive care, supported by research and education.

Treatment: The deliberate alteration of the chemical and/or physical aspects of cultural property, aimed primarily at prolonging its existence. Treatment may consist of stabilization and/or restoration.

The following issues warrant flagging material for conservation.

Photographs that are stuck together or rolled

If you come across items that appear to be very brittle, *immediately* stop activity on the item and alert the processing supervisor. Do not attempt to separate the photographs. Flag materials needing conservation treatment with acid-free paper marked "conservation" in pencil. Flag the materials in the finding aid's container list until further attention is available. Alert the processing supervisor to make a conservation note in the collection record.

Fragile or brittle documents

If you come across items that appear to be very brittle, *immediately* stop activity on the item and alert the processing supervisor. Documents that are brittle must be handled carefully. Flag materials needing conservation treatment with acid-free paper marked "conservation" in pencil. Flag the materials in the finding aid's container list until further attention is available. Alert the processing supervisor to make a conservation note in the collection record. Depending on the document, an access copy can be created to replace the original item in the folder. Use a separation form to note the issue and place one copy of the form in the folder with the facsimile. Place a second copy of the separation form with the fragile or brittle document and store with items marked for treatment. Do not tape or attempt to repair documents. Damaged documents can be placed in an archival sleeve or flagged for conservation if necessary. Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance.

Identifying Mold

Students should not handle mold. If you come across items that appear to have mold, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. The following tasks should not be carried out by students without a supervisor.

Mold blooms in many colors and is often confused with dust, dirt, foxing, or cobwebs. Both inactive and active mold can have a distinctive smell, which most people describe as musty. Active mold in the early stages of a bloom has hair-like filaments in webs, which develop a more bushy appearance as the bloom matures. This is more easily seen under magnification. Active mold is soft and may smear when touched with a fine brush. It may also be slimy and damp. Inactive mold is dry and powdery and will seem to brush off materials readily (1).

If an item appears to have mold *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor.

Handling Mold

Students should not handle mold. If you come across items that appear to have mold, *immediately* stop activity on the item, including the entire collection, and alert the processing supervisor. The following tasks should not be carried out by students without a supervisor.

1. Carefully handle all materials that are suspected to have mold contamination. If possible, sequester contaminated materials from library staff and collections immediately (1).
2. Work in an area with good ventilation and wear gloves that do not contain natural rubber. Well-fitted goggles can help to prevent eye irritation. If possible, inspect materials outdoors or under a fume hood. Ordinary dust masks do not provide adequate protection against inhalation of mold spores. Respirators are effective, but they should not be used unless the mask has been fit-tested and properly maintained (1).
3. Examine materials just enough to determine if the mold is active or inactive. For books, look particularly at the covers, edges, and end sheets; and inside the spine hollow. Take precautions to avoid inhaling or touching mold spores (1).
4. Consider carefully the significance of the affected materials and whether they can be discarded. Materials that have sustained mold damage will never regain their original appearance and will be especially susceptible to mold bloom in the future. It may be wise to try to identify duplicates collections or obtain replacements if they are available, rather than to salvage moldy materials. Materials earmarked for discard may be enclosed in Ziploc-type plastic bags and discarded in the regular trash (1).
5. If moldy materials must be retained, keep them isolated from other library holdings, in environmental conditions inhospitable to mold growth. Active mold will return to a dormant state and inactive mold will remain dormant as long as it is denied the moisture required for blooming. If mold is active and no clean dry storage space is immediately available, box the infected materials, wrap the boxes in plastic, and freeze them until arrangements can be made for drying and cleaning (1).

1. "Managing Mold Contamination." Managing Mold Contamination, Harvard University, <https://preservation.library.harvard.edu/managing-mold-contamination>.

IV. DESCRIPTION

The following definitions from Richard Pearce-Moses's *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology* were found online at the Society of American Archivists website:

<http://www2.archivists.org/glossary>

Description: The process of creating a finding aid or other access tools that allow individuals to browse a surrogate of the collection to facilitate access and that improve security by creating a record of the collection and by minimizing the amount of handling of the original materials.

Finding Aid: A description of records that gives the repository physical and intellectual control over the materials and that assists users to gain access to and understand the materials.

Just as arrangement provides physical control over the collection, description provides intellectual control over the collection. Writing a finding aid is the culmination of the processor's work with the collection and serves as a tool for users to access the collection. Since the processor has intimate knowledge of the collection as a result of processing, it is important to relay this knowledge to users via the finding aid. Any notes taken during processing will be helpful when writing the finding aid. The processor should consult the most current edition of *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS) at the Society of American Archivists website: http://files.archivists.org/pubs/DACS2E-2013_v0315.pdf. Consider reviewing the [Anti-Racist Description Resources](#) created by Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia. This paper addresses "anti-oppressive terms, concepts, and norms in order to deconstruct the white supremacist values that permeate American society, and by extension, the archival field" (page 1).

Use the *Finding Aid Template* in Appendix B and *Finding Aid Sample* in Appendix C as a guide for content, order of information, and format of the finding aid. Type the finding aid in a Microsoft Word document using 12-point Calibri font. The template references DACS rule numbers for reference.

The following are reminders in accordance to DACS; the last point is a local rule:

- Maintain internal consistency.
- Do not use abbreviations.
- Spell out acronyms at least once.
- Use brackets to indicate a folder title created by the processor and to maintain transparency for researchers.

V. FINAL STEPS

Once processing is complete, share the finding aid with the processing supervisor. When the finding aid is approved, enter the final folder numbers and box numbers into the container list in the finding aid. Write the folder numbers on the physical folders.

1. **Create box labels:** Consult with the processing supervisor to create box labels, which are generated from a departmental database.
2. **Email final finding aid** to the processing supervisor as both a Microsoft Word document and a PDF.
3. **Shelve collection:** Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with shelving the collection.
4. **Promote collection:** Consult with the processing supervisor to publish the finding aid online and create a blog entry for the [Open Archives Blog](#).

VI. SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia. [Anti-Racist Description Resources](#). October, 2019. <https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf>

Greene, Mark A. and Dennis Meissner. "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing." *The American Archivist* 68 (2005): 208-263. <<http://americanarchivist.org/doi/pdf/10.17723/aarc.68.2.c741823776k65863>>

National Film Preservation Foundation. *Film Preservation Guide, The: The Basics for Archives, Libraries, and Museums*. 2004. <<http://www.filmpreservation.org/preservation-basics/the-film-preservation-guide>>

Open Archives. University Archives and Special Collections, Joseph P. Healey Library, University of Massachusetts Boston. <<http://openarchives.umb.edu>>

Open Archives Blog. University Archives and Special Collections, Joseph P. Healey Library, University of Massachusetts Boston. <<http://blogs.umb.edu/archives/>>

Pearce-Moses, Richard. *A Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*. Society of American Archivists, 2005. <<http://www2.archivists.org/glossary>>

Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn and Diane Vogt L. O'Connor. *Photographs: Archival Care and Management*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2010. Print.

Roe, Kathleen D. *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005. Print.

University of California Systemwide Libraries. *Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries* (Version 3.2), 2012. <<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1sw157j3>>

VII. APPENDICES

A. Processing Checklist

Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with downloading the processing checklist.

PROCESSING CHECKLIST

Collection Name _____	Accession Number _____
Size of Collection Before (cubic feet) _____ After (cubic feet) _____	
Processor's Name _____	
Checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Survey <input type="checkbox"/> Processing Plan Completed and Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Processing Completed <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Flagged/Items Removed/ Separation Forms Filled Out <input type="checkbox"/> Finding Aid Approved and Saved on Database <input type="checkbox"/> Folders and Boxes Labeled Appropriately <input type="checkbox"/> Collection Shelved <input type="checkbox"/> Collection Posted Online <input type="checkbox"/> F/A put into Finding Aids Notebook <input type="checkbox"/> Blog post	Dates _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
Notes: <div style="background-color: #e0e0ff; height: 60px; border: 1px solid black;"></div>	

B. Finding Aid Template

See Appendix C for an example of a finding aid. Refer to DACS to review rules for description and to ensure that the finding aid is DACS compliant. Enter “Contact: library.archives@umb.edu” into the footer of the finding aid Word document.

Collection: #

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey Library
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, Massachusetts 02125
library.archives@umb.edu

COLLECTION TITLE [DACS 2.3]

Date span [DACS 2.4]

Accession Number: [DACS 2.1]

Repository: [DACS 2.2]

Creator: Use authorized form of name(s) of individuals or organizations responsible for the creation, accumulation or assembly of described materials. [DACS 2.6]

Title: title of collection [DACS 2.3]

Date [inclusive]: dates of collection material including bulk dates when appropriate. [DACS 2.4]

Extent: Total linear feet of collection, number of containers (record cartons, document cases, card file boxes, flat cases, etc.) [DACS 2.5]

Name of Creator: [if applicable] [DACS 2.6]

Language: [DACS 4.5]

Citation: [DACS 4.4]

Processing Information: Processed by Name, Month Year* [DACS 8.1]

Conditions on Use and Access: [DACS 4.1]

Copyright: Copyright restrictions may apply. [DACS 4.4.7]

PROVENANCE

- “This collection was transferred to University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston by [name of department] in [month year].”
- “This collection was donated to University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston by [name of donor] in [month year].”

[DACS 5.1]

PROCESSING NOTES

[DACS 3.2 and 7.1.8]

SOURCES OF INFORMATION [if applicable]

[DACS 2.7.4] Information from reliable secondary sources should be cited according to the rules of the MLA Style Manual. (See: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/11/>)

HISTORICAL NOTE

Create a biographical or historical note (or both when appropriate). Finding aid text should maintain a neutral, formal tone. Do not use interpretive, flowery, or subjective language. See Appendix C for a sample finding aid. [DACS 2.7]

SCOPE AND CONTENT

From DACS Second Edition 2013: Scope and Content include any or all of the following:

- What does the collection document?
- What topics does the collection cover?
- What formats are included?

[DACS 3.1]

RELATED MATERIALS [if applicable]

[DACS 6.3]

ARRANGEMENT

Series numbers should be uppercase Roman numerals and subseries numbers should be lowercase Roman numerals. [DACS 3.2]

CONTAINER LIST

Box: 1

Series I:

Subseries i.

1. Include box and folder numbers, folder titles, and folder date spans. Folders should be numbered sequentially, starting with 1. Folder numbering should start over with each series and subseries, rather than run throughout the collection. E.g.: Series 1 contains folders 1-40, Series 2 contains folders 1-95, Series 3 contains folders 1-55, etc.

C. Finding Aid Sample

The following finding aid sample displays the preferred layout.

Collection: SC-0200

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey Library
University of Massachusetts Boston
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, Massachusetts 02125
library.archives@umb.edu

LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS RECORDS 1880-2012, bulk 1965-1996

Accession Number: 115-58

Repository: University of Massachusetts Boston

Creator: League of American Bicyclists

Title: League of American Bicyclists records

Date [inclusive]: 1880-2012, bulk 1965-1996

Extent: 128 linear feet (seventy-eight cartons, sixteen flat boxes, seven document cases, two half document cases, four card boxes, nineteen pamphlet boxes, twenty linear feet of books, and sixteen oversize folders)

Name of Creator: These materials include records of this same body under its earlier name, League of American Wheelmen (name changed in 1994).

Languages: English (bulk), French, Italian, Russian

Citation: Courtesy of the University Archives and Special Collections Department, Joseph P. Healey Library, University of Massachusetts Boston: League of American Bicyclists records

Processing Information: Processed by Meghan Bailey and Brandon Wencek in June 2016 and updated in September 2016 and October 2016.

Conditions on Use and Access: This collection is open for research. The registration records of Pedal for Power events have been restricted until 2088. **OR** This collection has not been processed/has been minimally processed. It may contain restricted materials. Please contact library.archives@umb.edu in advance to request access, which may be granted within approximately two weeks.

Copyright: Copyright restrictions may apply.

PROVENANCE

The records of the League of American Bicyclists were donated to University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston on September 22, 2015 by Tom Helm.

PROCESSING NOTES

The original arrangement of folders and original folder titles were retained in most cases. Folder titles created by the archivist and information added to original folder titles are indicated by brackets in the folder list. Duplicates, personnel and medical information have been removed.

HISTORICAL NOTE

The League of American Bicyclists, formerly known as the League of American Wheelmen (LAW), was founded on May 30, 1880 in Newport, Rhode Island. Kirk C. Munroe, president of the New York Cycle Club, invited other clubs to Newport to address the need for cyclists to work together to advocate for their sport. One hundred fifty bicyclists from thirty-two different clubs came to Newport, where they officially formed the organization and wrote and ratified its constitution the next day. Their mission, as stated in the constitution, was “to promote the general interests of bicycling, to ascertain, defend and protect the rights of wheelmen, and encourage and facilitate touring.” Charles E. Pratt was elected LAW’s first president.

LAW’s first priority was to guarantee bicyclists’ legal access to roads, at a time when many laws, and ordinances were written to keep them off the roads. At that time, high wheel bicyclists had only the unpaved, rutted, dirt and gravel roads to ride on, so LAW worked with the post office, colleges, and farmers to advocate for improved road conditions. LAW began publishing *Good Roads* magazine in 1892 in its efforts to improve U.S. roads and was seen as a leader of the Good Roads Movement during the late nineteenth century to the early twentieth century.

Following the introduction of the safety bicycle in 1887, the bicycle industry experienced a boom, and so did LAW’s membership – increasing from 527 in its first year to more than 100,000 in 1898. The organization’s members included some famous faces, including John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Diamond Jim Brady, and Lillian Russell. As the bicycle craze subsided at the turn of the century, LAW’s membership dropped, falling to 8,629 in 1902. By 1924, LAW became inactive.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

These records document the activities of the League of American Bicyclists. Materials consist of files kept by staff and include by-laws, minutes, reports, correspondence, notes, pamphlets, flyers, newsletters, magazines, books, clippings, photographs, and maps. Election ballots can be found in Series I. Subseries 1. Governance and Board Records as well as the Series I. Subseries iii. General Records. Rally planning documents can be found in the Board of Directors meeting minutes within Series I. Subseries 1. Governance and Board Records as well as Series II. Events and Rallies. Likewise, many topics can be found across different series despite having their own series.

RELATED MATERIALS

The following source provides additional information on the League of American Bicyclists:
Phyllis Harmon: League of American Wheelmen (LAW) collection, 1880-2006

ARRANGEMENT

This collection is arranged in eight series, of which Series I, IV and VI have been further arranged in subseries. The series and subseries arrangement of the records are as follows:

Series I. Administration, 1892-1997

Subseries i. Governance and Board Records, 1892-1997

Subseries ii. Committees and Groups, circa 1963-1996

Subseries iii. General Records, 1965-1996

Series II. Event and Rallies, 1968-1997

Series III. Advocacy, 1965-1996

Series IV. Publications and Collected Resources, 1885-1999

Subseries i. LAW Publications, 1885-1999

Subseries ii. Publication Articles and Correspondence, 1977-1985

Subseries iii. Newspaper Clippings, 1865-1996

Subseries iv. Bicycle Club and Related Publications, 1976-1983

Subseries v. L.A.W. Library, 1886-1999, bulk 1970-1996

Series V. Scrapbooks, 1941-1955

Series VI. Media, 1890-1996

Subseries i. Photographs and Slides, 1890-1996

Subseries ii. Floppy disks, 1990-1993

CONTAINER LIST

Box: 1

Series I. Administration, 1892-1997

Subseries i: Governance and Board Records, 1892-1997

1. Aims and objectives of the League, circa 1969
2. Constitution and by-laws, [photocopy], 1892
3. League of American Wheelmen purpose, aims, and objectives, circa 1969-1976
4. By-laws of other organizations, theories, circa 1986
5. By-laws, constitution, code of ethics, and history, 1892-1993
6. By-laws revision [1 of 2], 1984
7. By-laws revision [2 of 2], 1984
8. By-laws modifications to consider, 1986-1989
9. Board of director's manual, 1988 April

10. Board director's manual, 1993 July

Subseries ii. Committees and Groups, circa 1963-1996

1. Executive Committee meeting proceedings, 1975 January-November
2. Executive Committee reports, 1989

Box: 2

3. Executive Committee reports [1 of 2], 1990
4. Executive Committee reports [2 of 2], 1990, 1991
5. Executive Committee conference call, 1991 April-October
6. Executive Committee conference call minutes, correspondence, 1992 January-October
7. Executive Committee minutes, correspondence, 1992 June-November

Series II. Events and Rallies, 1968-1997

1. Amish Land and Lakes ride, 1984 July 21
2. Aspen meeting, notes, correspondence, future of biking, 1989
3. *Bicycle USA* National Rally, Indianapolis, 1984 July
4. *Bicycle USA* National Rally, Madison, 1985 July
5. *Bicycle USA* National Rally, St. Louis, Missouri, 1986 July
6. *Bicycle USA* National Rally, Lansing, Michigan, 1987 July
7. Bike centennial 1976, correspondence and materials, 1974-1977
8. American Online, Bike event, minutes of executive committee, correspondence, 1995-1996
9. Holiday Inn, correspondence, 1996 March-May
10. League of American Wheelmen Sanctioned Century, National Century, materials, undated

D. Processing Plan Form

Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with downloading the processing plan form.

Processing Plan

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey | Library University of Massachusetts Boston

Processor Name: _____ Date: _____
Approved By: _____ Date: _____

Collection Name: _____
Date Span: _____
Creator: _____
Collection No.: _____
Accession No.: _____
Date(s) Accessioned: _____
Donor: _____
Restrictions: _____
Amount of Material: _____

General type of material

- Office files
- Personal papers
- Organizational papers
- Other: _____

Records Formats

- Paper
- Bound volumes
- Photographs
- Negatives
- Slides
- Maps/Blueprints
- Audio-visual: _____
- Digital media: _____
- Microfilm
- Ephemera
- Oversized
- Other: _____

Form ID: PROC01
Last updated: 1/8/15 JH

Processing Plan

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey | Library University of Massachusetts Boston

Current arrangement: Approved

Alphabetical

Chronological

Numerical

None

Other: _____

Proposed arrangement – include series and subseries: _____

Level of processing with explanation: _____

Minimal Box level Folder level Item level

Proposed preservation actions during processing: _____

Form ID: PROC01
Last updated: 1/8/15 JH

Processing Plan

University Archives and Special Collections
Joseph P. Healey | Library University of Massachusetts Boston

Processor's schedule:

For changes to schedule, contact supervisor:

Form ID: PROC01
Last updated: 1/8/15 JH

E. Separation Form

Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with downloading the separation form.

SEPARATION FORM

Date of Removal: _____ Initials: _____

Removed From: Coll.# _____ Box/Drawer # _____ Folder # _____

Series Name/#: _____

Folder Title: _____

Item description: _____

Format: Document Film Video Audio CD/DVD Publication
 Hard Drive Floppy Disk (3.5", 5.25", zip) Photograph
 Scrapbook Other: _____

Quantity: _____

Purpose of Removal: Photography Research Conservation Loan
 Media Storage Oversize Storage Digitization Archival Instruction Shelf
 Exhibit (Title): _____
 Other: _____

Access Copy Location, if available: _____

New Location: _____

New Folder Title: See item description above Other: _____

Multiple copies of this form should be made to place with the item removed, in the folder from which it was removed, and in a master file of separation or removal records.

Please see archivist for assistance in accessing this item.

Form ID: PROC02
Last updated: 07/10/19 MB

SEPARATION FORM

Date of Removal: _____ Initials: _____

Removed From: Coll.# _____ Box/Drawer # _____ Folder # _____

Series Name/#: _____

Folder Title: _____

Item description: _____

Format: Document Film Video Audio CD/DVD Publication
 Hard Drive Floppy Disk (3.5", 5.25", zip) Photograph
 Scrapbook Other: _____

Quantity: _____

Purpose of Removal: Photography Research Conservation Loan
 Media Storage Oversize Storage Digitization Archival Instruction Shelf
 Exhibit (Title): _____
 Other: _____

Access Copy Location, if available: _____

New Location: _____

New Folder Title: See item description above Other: _____

Multiple copies of this form should be made to place with the item removed, in the folder from which it was removed, and in a master file of separation or removal records.

Please see archivist for assistance in accessing this item.

Form ID: PROC02
Last updated: 07/10/19 MB

F. Inventory Template

Consult with the processing supervisor for assistance with downloading the inventory template.

COLLECTION #:			PROCESSOR:			
ACCESSION #:			Date:			
Box #	Location	Container Title	Contents	Linear feet	Notes	Processed Y/N?
1	82:02:01	Program Director Files	files	1		y
2	82:02:02	Program Director Files	files	1	Mold do not process	n
3	Proc. Room, Back table	Minutes	files	0.5		n
4	MB Office Table	Photos	photos	1		n