

# Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections PROCESSING MANUAL

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# I. Introduction

## I.A. Introduction and Project Assumptions

The goal of this manual is to provide standard practices for processing Brandeis University's archives and special collections. It is also a teaching tool for students and volunteers learning to work with archival materials. In writing the following chapters, we have set down local descriptive practices and established new methods and standards that will improve the quality of our processing and our finding aids.

We have borrowed heavily from several other organizations' processing manuals and would like to recognize in particular the University of Maryland, the University of California Irvine, the University of Texas Arlington, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Florida, and the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries. Also, the Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia's Anti-Racist Description Resources provided a basis and significant source material for designing our anti-oppressive practices, as well as the specific literature cited in the introduction to those concepts.

This manual is founded on the following assumptions:

- The ideal level of processing is not the same for every collection. The ultimate goal is to make collections available for research. Factors such as research value, donor agreements, record types, statistics on use, and others will determine the level of processing necessary. Staff should prioritize the type of work on the collection that will make it discoverable and usable for researchers.
- This manual should serve as a guide for professional archivists who participate in processing and also for the students, interns, and volunteers they oversee. Beginner processors will be provided with training and will be working through the manual with a supervisor. The manual cannot answer every question or consider every possibility. Processors are expected and encouraged to consult their supervisors and colleagues or the broader archival community.
- Processing steps that appear separately in the manual are often done simultaneously and are often repeated throughout the process. Arrangement and description are not linear processes, and are in many cases iterative.
- A collection will likely be handled by different people at different stages. Staff should aim to complete the desired stage where possible, but ultimately, keeping good records throughout the process will ensure continuity and will minimize lost time and labor.
- Due to backlogs and resource limitations, which are present in every archive, the majority of the improvements prescribed in this manual may not be retroactively applied to previously processed collections. We may be able to revisit some instances, with the

priority being to update anti-oppressive language and narrative notes (Access notes, processing notes, etc.).

## I.B. Implications for Reference, Outreach, and Teaching

This manual updates many processing and descriptive practices that have been standard at Brandeis for many years. The good news is that these updates will lead to greater consistency and transparency. They also provide for additional descriptive requirements that will assist reference, outreach, and teaching in new ways. These changes will be consistently applied to processing jobs moving forward.

The most obvious and relevant changes in relation to reference, outreach, and teaching are in three areas:

1. Tiered processing levels, including a minimal (MPLP) level
2. Additional note fields and processing information fields
3. Iterative processing and incorporation of feedback

The following is a closer look at each of these areas:

### 1. Tiered Processing Levels, Including a Minimal (MPLP) Level

Since the publication of the article ***More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing*** in 2005, archivists have been wrestling with the call to reel in time-consuming processing practices, to address backlogs, and to face the reality of the increased volume of records produced in the 20th and 21st centuries. This manual follows these and related recommendations. It provides a structure for determining the processing level of each accession and prescribes treatment actions based on that level. Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix provides an overview of those levels and actions.

The following should be expected from this new model:

- The difference between *processed* and *unprocessed* collections is less marked and less relevant. The binary between these has largely become outdated and most future collections will fall along a spectrum.
- The former expectation of fully rehoused, fully relabeled, and fully described collections (to the folder or item level) is no longer considered standard. That kind of intensive treatment will only be applied to collections determined to be of particular importance or which have associated funds.
- Keyword searching has never been the only way materials are discovered in our finding aids. It is important to remember that for many collections, both legacy and future collections, it will be necessary to use the narrative content in scope and content and series notes to help find materials of interest to researchers.

- There is now an option to designate restrictions at the box or series level (in addition to the folder or item level). By implementing this option, it will no longer be necessary to delay making a public restrictions designation due to lack of time and resources when specific boxes and series are heavy with restricted material. Reference staff will have the option to review restricted boxes and/or series as needed.
- Legacy collections that have remained unexamined since their arrival will be the only type considered unprocessed, and all previous precautions and operations should be applied to these collections. These can continue to be referred to as *unprocessed* until minimal processing has been done.

## 2. Additional Note Fields and Processing Information Fields

This manual calls for a greater number and more thorough note fields and requires many of these to be created earlier in the process.

There are several reasons for this:

- It provides for better collections control.
- It helps staff and researchers to understand the context of the collections better.
- It provides transparency into archival actions taken on the collection.
- It increases our participation in the social justice goals of the archival field.

Newly required notes for most collections include:

- Arrangement note
- Conditions Governing Access note (no longer a generic note)
- Processing information note
- Custodial History note

All of these are valuable pieces of information for our staff and our patrons. Detailed information on these notes can be found in Chapter 6. Writing Archival Description.

For example, the **Conditions Governing Access note** will require the processor or the supervisor to choose from the following statements regarding restrictions:

- The collection is open for research use and has no known restrictions.
- This collection is closed to researchers at this time. [Include opening date if known, expressed as: Collection will be opened mm/yyyy.]
- This collection contains restricted materials. Please contact the University Archives & Special Collections in advance to request access.
- This collection has not yet been reviewed for access and may contain restricted materials. Please contact the University Archives & Special Collections in advance to request access.

### 3. Iterative Processing and Incorporation of Feedback

Processing in the post-MPLP era is considered iterative, and as a result, finding aids should also be considered iterative. Collection description may be expanded and changed based on new information. A finding aid should not be considered a finalized product (if it ever was) and updates should be expected.

If reference or outreach staff repeatedly spend time helping researchers with an under-processed collection, then that collection (or one of its popular series) should be considered for additional processing. It will be helpful to have a line of communication from reference staff back to collection managers/supervisors to help inform iterative processing priorities. It is also helpful to share any relevant user experiences. The following information should be submitted to the **Processing Priorities list** in ClickUp:

- Title of collection
- Portion of collection requiring attention
- Issue encountered
- Usage stats
- Notes



## I.C. Definitions and Basic Archival Concepts

### What is Archival Processing?

Archival processing includes all the activities carried out in order to prepare archival materials for storage and use by patrons. Processing activities include designing both an intellectual and a physical arrangement for the materials, describing the contents of a collection in writing, and housing the archival materials in order to preserve them. These concepts, and their archival terminology, will be discussed in detail below.

### Why Organize Things?

The goal of organizing, or *processing*, an archival collection is to make the materials accessible, identifiable, and coherent for those who wish to use them. Arranging and describing the contents of a collection allows archivists to identify the major subjects and themes of the materials, as well as to make those subjects easily accessible for researchers. Further, by making the arrangement concise and relevant to the subject material, archivists ensure that the information can be retrieved efficiently. Processing actions also allow archivists to plan for the protection and preservation of a collection. By reviewing, and in some cases rearranging materials, preservation issues become noticeable and can be addressed.

## Glossary of Archival Terminology

### Appraisal

In archives, appraisal refers to the process of determining the research value of donated materials. Often, collections will include materials that may have been unintentionally included by a donor, or that may simply not add anything to the evidentiary nature of a collection. The key to appraisal is understanding the relevance of the collection materials to the institution and its collecting scope. According to the Society of American Archivists, *“the basis of appraisal decisions may include a number of factors, including the records’ provenance and content, their authenticity and reliability, their order and completeness, their condition and costs to preserve them, and their intrinsic value.”* Appraisal can be performed at any processing level (collection, box, series, folder, or item), and at any point in a collection’s lifecycle (donation, accessioning, and/or processing).

*For more in-depth instructions in the process of archival appraisal, see Chapter 5 section 5.B. Appraisal*

### Archival Description

Archival description is the professional term for summarizing the contents of an archival collection in writing. Archival description is most often expressed in a finding aid--an archival

document with specific, required information fields, designed to give a snapshot of the collection's major subjects and themes. These fields describe the materials' physical characteristics, provenance, subject matter, and any restrictions imposed on the collection.

The most essential type of description in archival work is Hierarchical Description. This refers to the way in which archival materials are both physically arranged and narratively described in relation to one another. The top level of the hierarchy is always a general description of the collection, and then the organization narrows down to more specific units such as boxes, series, subseries, folders, and/or items nested below the level just above. This form of intellectual arrangement and description allows researchers to understand the context in which the materials were created and used by the person or organization responsible for them.

## **ArchivesSpace**

ArchivesSpace (often referred to as Aspace) is an open source content management software designed specifically for archival information. It provides online access to archival finding aids and digital objects. Brandeis utilizes ArchivesSpace to manage the finding aids for both University Archives and Special Collections. The staff end of ArchivesSpace can be found [here](#).

## **Arrangement**

Arrangement is the professional term for the intellectual and physical ordering of archival materials. Arrangement is a twofold process. First, an archivist must make connections between the various subjects with a collection, and decide how they might be sequenced in order to preserve the materials' context—this is intellectual arrangement. Then, physical arrangement is the actual organization of the materials in relation to each other. These processes can occur at varying levels of detail, from a general identification of subjects by box, to the imposition of a complex hierarchy of Series and Subseries.

## **Context**

Context is both internal and external to archival materials. The collection's internal context is situational information about the materials, which explains where they came from, why they were created and preserved, and what they meant to those who used them. All of these things are crucial for the archivist in judging the research value of the materials, as well as for the researcher in understanding the conditions surrounding the collection's creation and use. The external form of context is the personal context of those who encounter an archival collection. This occurs throughout the processing work, as the archivist approaches arrangement and description of a collection with their own biases and opinions. Similarly, inherent biases can also affect a researcher's interpretation of archival materials.

## **Deaccession**

To deaccession archival materials is to formally remove a collection or part of a collection from a repository. It involves recording defensible reasoning for the removal, and either transferring the

collection to a more suitable repository, returning it to its original donor, or disposing of the materials by secure methods.

According to the Society of American Archivists, *“materials may be deaccessioned because the repository has changed its collections policy and the material is no longer within its scope, or because they have been reappraised and found to be no longer suitable for continued inclusion in the holdings. Materials that are badly damaged and beyond repair may [also] be deaccessioned.”*

### **Describing Archives, A Content Standard (DACS)**

*“Describing Archives, A Content Standard,”* shortened to DACS, contains the standard rules for describing archival materials in the United States and Canada. The standard lists each element that could be included in an archival finding aid, and explains what information should be included in those fields. It is necessary to have a content standard in order to increase the standardization of archival descriptions. For more information, you can refer to the [current web version of DACS](#).

### **Finding Aid**

A finding aid is the traditional format for archival description, which allows researchers to gain physical and intellectual access to an archival collection. Use of a finding aid can help readers to ascertain the relevance of a collection to their research. A finding aid also contextualizes the collection by providing further information about the people and subjects included, the acquisition and provenance of the collection, and the organization and arrangement of the materials.

### **More Product, Less Process (MPLP)**

The term *“MPLP”* or *“More Product, Less Process”* was coined by Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner in their article, ***More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing***. The idea of working with a MPLP process is to reduce backlogs and save time by processing archival collections only at the Series level or above. Also referred to as minimal processing, this technique allows archivists to address more collections in less time, thereby making a larger body of material available to researchers at a faster pace. Some features of MPLP processing, according to the Society of American Archivists, might include: *“retaining staples and other fasteners in collections, keeping original folders, relying on minimal descriptions and keeping the original physical arrangement of the collections, including keeping newspaper clippings and photographs in situ.”*

### **Original Order**

The original order of materials is the organization scheme applied to the collection by its creator, or the state in which the records were kept when in active use. The principle of original order

intends that an archivist should maintain the creator's arrangement whenever possible. This can be difficult, and may require reconstruction, as the often gets confused by family members or those who hold the records prior to their donation to an institution. It is important to note that any new order imposed on a collection by an intermediary between the creator and the collection's donation is not to be considered the original order. The reason for attempting to preserve original order is to preserve the context in which the collection was actually put together and used by its creator. This principle is usually more critical when processing organizational records or professional papers than when working with personal papers.

*N.B. In the event that a collection's original order has been lost through time or the donation process, or if it was random and incomprehensible to begin with, then the archivist should impose a reasonable order on the materials.*

## **Provenance**

Provenance is traditionally defined as the “*origin or source of something*” (SAA). In archival terms, a collection's provenance is understood to be the chain of ownership through which the collection passed before being donated to an institution. Understanding the chain of custody allows archivists to prove the authenticity of certain documents, as well as to understand the context in which the materials were created, used, and preserved.

Knowing the ownership history of a collection offers a greater understanding of a collection's research value and historical significance, but it is also crucial in determining whether the materials can be ethically and legally brought into an archive's collection. Provenance research is especially relevant when undertaking anti-oppressive archival practice. The issue of creatorship is fraught within the archival world, as the creator of an archival collection is generally considered to be the person or corporation responsible for creating or compiling the entire collection. This leads to issues when there are multiple material creators, or, most significantly, in the case of marginalized communities whose creative works, legal records, etc. are collected and donated by someone from outside that group. Understanding the difference between a collection's creator, compiler, and/or owners allows archivists to acknowledge those responsible for actually creating materials.

## **Restrictions**

The Society of American Archivists defines restrictions as “*limitations on an individual's access to or use of materials.*” Access restrictions are usually imposed due to the nature of the materials being either highly private or confidential. It is important to note that archivists generally do not restrict materials simply because they might be considered controversial. Restrictions may be imposed at the request of the donor, at the archivist's discretion, or due to legal regulations (for example, HIPAA or FERPA). An access restriction usually consists of a collection being closed to researchers for a specific time period, determined by the nature of the materials' sensitivity. Another option for access restriction involves placing a limitation on the

type of researcher who is allowed to view the materials. For example, only members of the Office of the President may be allowed access to sensitive departmental records.

A use restriction, on the other hand, limits what a researcher can do with the collection materials, in terms of reproducing them or using them in publications. This type of restriction is often determined by the copyright status of the materials, and whether Brandeis holds the rights to them. Donors may also negotiate use restrictions with the archives upon donation of their collection.

## **Sampling**

The term sampling is used locally at Brandeis to mean the process of examining a small set of folders or items within a box or series, rather than looking at every document and/or folder, in order to quickly identify some characteristic of those materials. For example, you might look at the accuracy of the titles on 5-10 folders in a box to gauge whether, generally, the folder titles in that box are correct and usable.

## **Series / Subseries**

The Society of American Archivists defines a series as a group of records that are arranged according to some arrangement scheme (numerical, chronological, record type, etc.) and/or that are related as the result of being created, received, or used in the same activity. A series can also be thought of as a group of records that are related based on content. The use of series and/or subseries is a form of hierarchical description, which according to SAA, is “*a technique of writing a finding aid by describing the collection from general to specific, starting with the whole, then proceeding to the components (series, subseries, folders, and items).*” Series provide structure when describing a larger or more complex collection, giving researchers access points into the materials and making the collection easier to use. For example, you might have a *Correspondence* series that contains all the letters in a collection. The materials contained within a series can have no order at all, or they might be arranged in a consistent pattern such as alphabetical, numerical, chronological, or by subject.

Series can also be further broken down into subseries, in order to make a large amount of materials more digestible. Following the previous example, a *Correspondence* series might be broken down into two subseries, called *Personal Correspondence* and *Professional Correspondence*. According to the University of Florida, “*a subseries is simply a series within a series.*”

## **Titles (Existing/Given Title vs. Devise Title)**

A title is simply a word or phrase that identifies something (SAA). Titles can be assigned to every part of an archival collection, from the collection in its entirety, to series and folders, and even individual items. There are two types of titles that you will encounter when working on an archival collection:

According to DACS, an existing or given title is “*a formal title most commonly found in material that has been published or distributed, such as a title on a book, report, map, or film.*” A formal title can also mean a title that was given by the creator of the material. Existing or given titles can be found at any level of description, including collection, box, folder, or item level.

A devised title, on the other hand, is a title created by an archivist when there is no existing or given title for the materials being described, or when that existing title is misleading or inadequate (DACS). A devised title is usually composed of two parts: the name of the person, family, or organization that created the materials, and a term which describes the type of materials present (such as *papers* or *records*).

*For more information about creating titles, see Chapter 6 section 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item).*

## I.D. Prioritizing Social Justice and Working Toward a Reparative Archive

### Introduction

*“When archivists and their institutions acknowledge the marginalization or absence of the oppressed they must respond through establishing a reparative archive that engenders inclusivity. Reparative archival work does not pretend to ignore the imperialist, racist, homophobic, sexist, ableist, and other discriminatory traditions of mainstream archives, but instead acknowledges these failures and engages in conscious actions toward a wholeness that may seem to be an exercise in futility but in actuality is an ethical imperative for all within traditional archival spaces” (Hughes-Watkins).*

The Brandeis University Mission and Diversity Statements communicate social justice aims that emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion. As a department, University Archives & Special Collections contributes to these aims, and is working toward establishing a truly reparative archive. The Brandeis University Archives Mission Statement reads:

*“The Archives works in support of the University’s goals regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion, and is informed by anti-oppressive standards and practices as they evolve within the archives profession.”—July 2020*

We endeavor to address issues related to social justice by grounding our practices in the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics. SAA outlines ethical considerations for archival practice, and from that documentation the following concepts are particularly relevant to archival processing:

- *Expand access and usage opportunities for users, and potential users, of archival records.*
- *Develop and follow professional standards that promote transparency and mitigate harm.*
- *Respect the diversity found in humanity and advocate for archival collections to reflect that rich complexity.*

In addition to a basis in profession-wide best practices, we have conceived local practices that allow us to work within our current systems and tools while also prioritizing reparative archival practice.

## MPLP and Our Goals

This manual emphasizes two priorities which might, at first glance, appear contradictory. Throughout this guide, we will emphasize MPLP (*“More Product, Less Process”*) practices through which we hope to provide timely description for a greater number of collections, and to complete this work closer to the point of acquisition. This practice provides the greatest breadth of access to our collections and allows us to assist a broader range of researchers. In order to achieve this, some more laborious processes need to be adjusted, including our expectations around detailed hierarchical description and voluminous administrative and biographical histories.

On the other hand, our social justice emphasis requires us to add certain elements, and/or increase detail in others, in order to meet our ethical aims. If we are to bring both efficiency and ethics into our processing practice, we need to make crucial decisions about which descriptive elements and administrative tasks to spend labor on. This manual attempts to create that balance.

The next few sections will go into more detail about our major goals in the area of social justice, and their impact on the shape of finding aids going forward.

## Acknowledge Creators, Complex Provenance, and Lift Up Marginalized Voices

Mario H. Ramirez discusses the fundamental influence of whiteness in the archives in his article, ***Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative***. He says:

*“...to be in possession of whiteness was to be in possession of the right to own and not be owned, to assert a level of agency that provided access to a bevy of rights and privileges purposively withheld from nonwhites as a means of appropriating their territories and physical labor. Constructed as vehicles for domination, whiteness and white identity in turn created value for those allowed to align themselves with them and established a social, historical, and political precedent whose system of white privilege continues to have ramifications for North American society” (Ramirez 342).*

This privilege also extends to the realm of archival materials. The fields of historical preservation and scholarship have a long history of privileging white stories over those belonging to people of color, as well as trading in materials taken from BIPOC communities by white *collectors*. This is a history that we aim to mitigate by taking the time to unravel complex custodial histories, understanding the true origins of the materials we collect, and lifting up the marginalized voices in those collections. Further, in addition to addressing privilege and marginalization in our collections, we also seek to balance power dynamics in many situations, including that of student work collected by professors and research administrators.



Brandeis University Archives and Special Collections acknowledges that the traditional systems of archival categorization and description unquestionably privilege stories told through the lens of whiteness, patriarchy, and other majority identities. The inequities inherent in archival work are systemic in nature, and true change will require a large-scale, concerted effort to modify our practices and tools in a reparative manner. In the meantime, on a local scale, we are endeavoring to utilize the tools at hand to begin prioritizing social justice in the archives and lifting up the marginalized voices in our collections. For example, the limitations of our current tools require us to continue using the *Creator* field to represent the person or organization responsible for bringing a collection into being, regardless of whether or not they actually created the materials. This obviously privileges the voice of white compilers and those who *collected* materials not their own. To remedy this, we must adapt our use of descriptive tools such as ArchivesSpace, as well as certain definitions and descriptive fields, in order to begin working to mitigate harm. The focus of these efforts includes:

- Expanding the traditional archival concept of provenance to encompass the entire context surrounding a collection, including creation, use, appropriation/loss, compilation, and eventually donation. Approaching collections with this definition of provenance gives us the opportunity to acknowledge marginalized creators whose records and creative works were acquired and donated by those in positions of power over them.
- Repurposing of the Custodial History Note to document our expanded, reconstructed provenance, beyond a simple chain of custody.
- Use of the Processing Information Note to document the archivist's work to reconstruct provenance alongside other processing actions carried out on a collection.

These actions represent our first steps towards a more just set of archival practices, and are enacted with the expectation that they should grow and evolve over time. It is our hope that these actions will serve to elucidate the work of marginalized creators, and shift the perspective of *creation* away from white and/or dominant collectors.

## Increase Transparency around Archival Practice and Decision-making

In her article ***Toward More Honest Description***, author Jennifer Douglas quotes well-known archival theorist Terry Cook, stating, *“the [archival] profession preaches the merits of accountability through good records to any who will listen..how accountable are archivists willing to be through keeping good records about themselves about what they do and making these records readily available?”* (Douglas 38). The first step towards making archival practice more transparent is acknowledging archivists' impact on the collections we process. The interpretation and contextualization of historical records is not a neutral act. Authors Michelle Light and Tom Hyry argue in their work, ***Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid***, that archivists' insistence on a policy of neutrality actually obfuscates the decisions involved in appraising archival collections and writing archival description (the most socially and politically important parts of our work), writing them off as *“routine decisions, only available to and understood by initiated experts”* (Light and Hyry 221). In truth, archivists bring their own opinions, experiences, and biases to every collection that is accessioned, appraised,

and processed. In order to work towards justice in archival practice, we as processors must confront the influence we hold over the establishment of the historical record in general, and over the histories of specific communities. It is our goal to approach processing decisions openly and to make ourselves accountable to our patrons.

By increasing transparency around archival practice and record-keeping decisions, we are aiming to take the first step in addressing the issues inherent in the white supremacist notion of Paternalism in the archives, as defined in ***The Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture***, by Tema Okun. Paternalism is defined by Okun as the following:

- *“decision-making is clear to those with power and unclear to those without it*
- *those with power think they are capable of making decisions for and in the interests of those without power*
- *those with power often don't think it is important or necessary to understand the viewpoint or experience of those for whom they are making decisions*
- *those without power understand they do not have it and understand who does*
- *those without power do not really know how decisions get made and who makes what decisions, and yet they are completely familiar with the impact of those decisions on them” (Okun)*

As a practical method of increasing transparency in our processing, we have decided to institute the use of a Processing Information note in all newly-created or updated finding aids. A Processing Information note allows the archivist to record their processing actions, and to contextualize the work they have done for researchers. Similarly, this note can be used to record when *no action* has been taken at a particular step in processing, and to acknowledge the continuing influence of the creator and/or donor on the collection. Brandeis's new local practices for this note will require the inclusion of the following:

- A statement describing earlier processing work done on the collection, and the date of that work.
- Any changes to the physical arrangement of the collection made by the processor.
- A statement about the level of work done to investigate and address any restrictions present in the collection.
- A description of any research into the collection's provenance and/or work done to unravel a case of complex provenance.
- A statement about the appraisal actions taken, including collection materials weeded during processing.

- A statement about the creation of titles at the collection, series, box, folder, and item levels stating whether the titling language was devised by either the current, or a former, processing archivist, or if it was created by the collection's creator and/or donor.

By having clear documentation of our processing practices and the influence the archivist has over the interpretation of collections, we aim to demystify our institutional practices and allow patrons into our process. We hope to empower our users to consider where their materials came from and to participate in their continued preservation and contextualization.

## Provide Accurate Description while Mitigating Harm

The issue of neutrality, as addressed in the Transparency section above, is just as critical to the discussion of archival description as it is to general processing practice. Neutrality was once the defining characteristic of archival practice, as Jennifer Douglas discusses in her article, ***Toward More Honest Description***:

*“Early writings on archival theory and methodology stressed the moral imperative for the archivist neither to add to nor subtract from the archives, to preserve the archives in the “pure” state in which it was received from its creator, or to return it to that “pure” state so that it “says what it has to say” without any intervention or corruption; the archivist was supposed to be objective in all respects, not an active shaper of the archives he or she cared for, but a neutral custodian.” (Douglas 27)*

And yet, neutrality is a concept that most now acknowledge as an impossibility in the archives, especially those that wish to address equity and marginalization in their collections. When considering this subject in their work, ***From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives***, authors Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor ask, “*What happens when we scratch beneath the surface of the veneer of detached professionalism and start to think of recordkeepers and archivists less as sentinels of accountability (or accomplices in human rights violations on the other, and less acknowledged, end of the spectrum) and more as caregivers, bound to records creators, subjects, users, and communities through a web of mutual responsibility?*” This is our goal, to provide honest description while prioritizing care both for record subjects and those invested in or affected by their preservation.

Our practical aims in relation to description are as follows:

- Establish the use of descriptive notes (as described above), including the Processing Information note and the Custodial History note, to describe our collections in a more accurate, caring, and transparent manner.
- Focus on the language, voice, and style of our description, as described in the ***Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources***.
- Prioritize honesty over neutrality in language, and differentiate between and denote creator- and archivist-supplied titles and other description. Consider the impact that language may have on users and “weigh MPLP-type re-use of creator description

*against the use of terms that are harmful” (Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group).*

- Have care in how we describe people and the records of people’s lives. Consider how we write biographies and scope and content notes, and seek out already-published scholarship (especially that written by the subject or members of the subject’s community) as information sources, instead of rewriting a subject’s history ourselves.

## Responsibly Maintain Privacy and Confidentiality

As keepers of student records, Brandeis University Archives & Special Collections takes the task of protecting student privacy very seriously. The Archives maintains a Use Policy on University Photographs of Students that restricts the use of photographs of students that could prove harmful, or invite retaliation, in their future lives and careers. The policy states in part:

*“Photos whose subject matter could not be considered controversial or personal may be allowed. Controversial and personal subject matter regarding students includes the following: 1. Photo evidence of participation in clubs or activities that focus on sexual or gender identity or that provide information as to a student’s politics or a student’s health; 2. Photos with evidence of participation in pre-college and remedial educational programs; 3. Photos with evidence of any illegal activity or disciplinary action; 4. Photos of people who are obviously much younger than the age of consent (18 years).”*

It is our hope that, during their time at Brandeis, students should feel free to express themselves and to engage in activism and education without fear of repercussions as a result of archival documentation. Photos including Brandeis students are allowed to be viewed in the Reading Room, but remote access, copying, and use are restricted. Further, Brandeis restricts directory information and lists of student information or memberships. The Registrar’s office is the authority for these materials, and maintains a strict policy of confidentiality.

The Archives is looking to extend our high standards for privacy and confidentiality to all actors in political activism materials, as we are cognizant of the issues inherent in collecting those materials. Care is especially important when it comes to activism by communities of color and other marginalized groups protesting for fundamental rights. Brandeis’s long history of activism is a point of pride for the University, and we certainly acknowledge the sensitivity required when preserving those materials. We are currently exploring ways of growing our privacy practices to include materials other than student records.

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## Chapter Summary

### Goals from the SAA Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics:

- Expand access and usage opportunities for users, and potential users, of archival records.
- Develop and follow professional standards that promote transparency and mitigate harm.
- Respect the diversity found in humanity and advocate for archival collections to reflect that rich complexity.

### Local Goals and Action Items:

- Use MPLP processes to increase access to collections
- Acknowledge creators, complex provenance, and lift up marginalized voices
  - Expand the traditional archival concept of *provenance* to encompass the entire context surrounding a collection, including creation, use, appropriation/loss, compilation, and eventual donation. Approaching collections with this definition of provenance gives us the opportunity to acknowledge marginalized creators whose records and creative works were acquired and donated by those in positions of power over them.
  - Repurpose the Custodial History note to document our expanded, reconstructed provenance, beyond a simple chain of custody.
  - Use the Processing Information note to document the archivist's work to reconstruct provenance alongside other processing actions carried out on a collection.
- Increase transparency around archival practice and decision-making
  - Use the Processing Information note to record the following:
    - A statement describing earlier processing work done on the collection, and the date of that work.
    - Any changes to the physical arrangement of the collection made by the processor.
    - A statement about the level of work done to investigate and address any restrictions present in the collection.
    - A description of any research into the collection's provenance and/or work done to unravel a case of complex provenance.
    - A statement about the appraisal actions taken, including collection materials weeded during processing.
    - A statement about the creation of titles at the collection, series, box, folder, and item levels stating whether the titling language was devised by either the current, or a former, processing archivist, or if it was created by the collection's creator and/or donor.
- Provide accurate description while mitigating harm

- Establish the use of descriptive notes (including the Processing Information note and the Custodial History note) to describe our collections in a more accurate, caring, and transparent manner.
- Focus on the language, voice, and style of our description, as described in the ***Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources***.
- Prioritize honesty over neutrality in language, and differentiate between and denote creator- and archivist-supplied titles and other description. Consider the impact that language may have on users and “weigh MPLP-type re-use of creator description against the use of terms that are harmful” (*Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group*).
- Have care in how we describe people and the records of people’s lives. Consider how we write biographies and scope and content notes, and seek out already-published scholarship (especially that written by the subject or members of the subject’s community) as information sources, instead of rewriting a subject’s history ourselves.
- Responsibly maintain privacy and confidentiality
  - Consider who is identified in materials, especially those belonging to students and those relating to activism and identity. Restrict access to those collections where appropriate.

## I.E. Locating, Viewing, and Examples of Finding Aids

Here are directions for easily locating finding aids in both the public view and the staff view.

See *Introduction section [I.C. Definitions and Basic Archival Concepts](#) for the definition of a finding aid.*

### Locating All Finding Aids

To see a finding aid in the public view:

Point your browser to the [Brandeis Finding Aid Database](#) and type identifying words of the title into the main search box on the left. If you get many results, you may use the “Collections” filter on the left pane to limit them. Then select the collection you wish to view. You will be given three possible view modes, “Collection overview,” “Finding aid,” and “Contents list.” Note that in the public view you can only see portions of finding aids or entire finding aids which have been published.

To see a finding aid in the staff view:

Point your browser to the [Brandeis ArchivesSpace Homepage](#) and log in. Click on the “Browse” tab and select “Resources” from the drop-down menu. Then type identifying words from the title of the collection in the search bar on the left side called “Filter by Text.” Titles which most closely match your search should appear first in the results. Once you have located the collection you want in the list you have the choice to see the finding aid in “view” or “edit” mode. The view mode is simpler, but edit mode will show you more information, including fields which are currently empty. All finding aids can be seen in the staff view, even ones which have not been published.

### Examples of Finding Aids

The following finding aids will be helpful models to illustrate various levels of description. These examples are relatively thorough and come closest to meeting our current standards.

- Special Collections collection level finding aid: [Trigère family papers](#)
- University Archives box level finding aid: [John P. Roche papers](#)
- Special Collections folder level finding aids: [Lilith Magazine records](#) and [Lenny Bruce collection](#)
- University Archives folder level finding aid: [Student Activism at Brandeis collection](#)



## I.F. Handling and Care Guidelines for Processing Staff

This content is a condensed and altered version of the ***Archives & Special Collections Preservation Treatment Manual chapter: "Handling and Care guidelines for A&SC Materials."*** The alterations are mostly an effort to address processing at defined levels as developed in the Processing Manual. These guidelines should be followed for all levels of processing.

### Standard Work Practices

- Do not eat or drink while working with University Archives or Special Collection materials.
- Keep work area clean and free of clutter.
- Keep hands clean. Do not use hand cream or hand sanitizers.
- Wear white gloves when handling negatives, photographs or works of art.
- Use only pencils when working with Archives or Special Collections.

### Handling Books and Paper Materials

- When working with a book it should be cradled in two hands or placed flat on a desk or table. The two weakest points of bindings are the hinges where the boards are attached to the spine, and the spine itself.
- Never wet your finger to turn a page.
- Take caution when turning pages. Fragile paper will fracture with an abrupt grip or turn.
- Pages should be carefully turned even when the paper appears strong. It is common in Special Collection books to find an uncut page. A quick turn may rip the pages apart before you are even aware it was attached at a corner, top, or bottom.
- Never attempt to open pages that are not pre-cut. Send to the Preservation Department to have them opened with a proper tool.
- Never force a book open. Many books are oversewn. If you open the book too wide the paper could fracture around the sewing thread.
- Do not stack books or place them face down.
- Do not rest anything on the top of an opened book or folder.
- Avoid the temptation to balance a book, folder, or object on your lap while looking up information on the computer. Make sure the item is on a flat surface.
- Do not erase any markings. Notes written may add value to the content.
- Handle microfilm, photographs, disks, and tapes by the edges.
- Provide adequate support for fragile and brittle paper materials. Transport on acid-free board or heavy folder stock. Sandwich paper between boards if moving it any distance.
- When retrieving large items such as maps and posters from flat file drawers, first remove all materials above them. Paper can tear when pulled out from under heavy materials.

## Photocopying

- Do not photocopy books of special value unless there is a way to do so without opening the spine further than 90 degrees.
- Very fragile materials should not be photocopied.
- The spine of the book should never be pressed down with the hand.
- All photocopying should be done on acid-free paper.

## Report any of the following the Collections Archivist

- Materials with obvious live mold.
- Materials that have black or colored spots.
- Materials that have water stains.
- Materials that have a musty odor.

# Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix

The Levels of Processing Matrix on the following pages is a snapshot of the tiered approach to processing which many archives subscribe to today. It is fundamental to the processing practices established in this manual. The Matrix defines our understanding of each level of processing work from Collection Level down to Item Level as well as the various actions to be completed at those levels in the areas of arrangement, description, preservation, and restrictions.

Choosing a processing level is done in consultation with the supervisor, and the collection attributes upon which this decision is made are illustrated in the Appendix section A.4. Levels of Processing: Decision-Making Chart.

Level of Processing	Arrangement	Description	Housing and Preservation	Restrictions / Privacy Issues
Level 1  Minimal / Collection Level	Intellectual: Identify signs of overall intellectual arrangement present, if any.  Physical: Retain order in which collection was received, which may or may not be <u>original order</u> .	Collection-level finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> with basic Scope & Content note.  Retain existing folder titles.	Review collection for immediate preservation threats like insects, mold, fragile materials.  Rehouse only if the housing is unstable.  Refolder only if severe condition issues are present.	No review at this level <b>but</b> refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues. 1. Restrict at collection level. 2. Include Conditions Governing Access note in finding aid and review collection for access on-demand.
Level 2  Box Level	Intellectual: Identify whether boxes have themes (Example: Box 1 is Correspondence; Box 2 is Diaries; etc.).  Physical: Box order can be changed to bring together related materials. Otherwise, retain order in which collection was received.	Box-level descriptions for finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> or spreadsheet with Scope & Content note and all other relevant notes.  <i>(Box-level description is defined as a high-level listing of the contents of each box, ideally summarized.)</i>  Retain existing folder titles.  <i>Express box dates in decades.</i>	Review collection for immediate preservation threats like insects, mold, fragile materials.  Rehouse only if housing is unstable.  Refolder only if severe condition issues are present or if labels are no longer useable. Folder loose materials.  Remove rubber bands if easily accessible.	Conduct brief review at this level <b>and</b> refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues. 1. Restrict by the box. 2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review box for access on-demand.

Level of Processing	Arrangement	Description	Housing and Preservation	Restrictions / Privacy Issues
Level 3  Series Level	<p>Intellectual: Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its series/ subseries. Or create a new order using series/subseries.</p> <p>Physical: Basic reorganization of folders into series OK if necessary.</p>	<p>Series/subseries level finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> or spreadsheet with Scope &amp; Content note and all other relevant notes.</p> <p>Retain existing folder titles.</p> <p>Express dates <i>either in decades or as exact years</i>.</p>	<p>Review collection for immediate preservation threats like insects, mold, fragile materials.</p> <p>Rehouse in acid-free boxes.</p> <p>Refolder if condition issues are present or if labels are no longer useable. Folder loose materials.</p> <p>Remove rubber bands and rusty clips, staples, or binders.</p>	<p>Conduct a review at this level <b>and</b> refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the series or subseries. 2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review series for access on-demand.</p>
Level 4  File / Folder Level	<p>Intellectual: Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its folder order. Or create a new folder order. Series/ subseries may be used.</p> <p>Physical: Reorganization of folders is OK if necessary.</p>	<p>Series/subseries level finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> or spreadsheet with folder lists. (<i>A combination of series and folder level description is OK.</i>)</p> <p><i>Detailed Scope &amp; Content note and all other relevant notes.</i></p> <p><i>Standardize and improve existing folder titles.</i></p> <p>Express dates as <i>exact years</i>.</p>	<p>Rehouse in acid-free boxes and folders.</p> <p>Maintain multiple items per folder. Retain original folder contents or folder based on document type, if loose.</p> <p>Perform selective preservation for damaged items.</p> <p>Remove rubber bands, rusty clips, staples, and binders. May unfold and unroll paper.</p>	<p>Conduct a review at this level <b>and</b> refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the folder. 2. Separate or denote restricted folders to assist reference where possible.</p>

Level of Processing	Arrangement	Description	Housing and Preservation	Restrictions / Privacy Issues
Level 5 Item Level	<p>Intellectual: Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its item order. Or create a new item order. Series/subseries may be used.</p> <p>Physical: Reorganization of items is OK if necessary.</p>	<p><i>Create a full finding aid</i> in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> with item lists.</p> <p>Detailed Scope &amp; Content note and all other relevant notes.</p> <p><i>Standardize and improve new</i> folder titles.</p> <p>Express dates in <i>exact years or as mm/dd/yyyy</i>.</p>	<p>Rehouse and refolder in acid-free boxes and folders.</p> <p>Ideally, house 1 item per folder.</p> <p>Address all preservation needs. Remove all staples and hardware, unfold and unroll paper.</p>	<p>Conduct a review at this level <b>and</b> refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the item. 2. Separate or denote restricted items to assist reference.</p>

## Chapter 2. Accessioning

Accessioning is the first step in achieving intellectual and physical control over materials received into an archival repository. It is essential that the accession record be thorough and complete as there may be no way to recreate important information at a later date. For this reason the accession record is considered one of the most important records archivists create. It is also the first step in a collection's processing journey. It is paramount that accessioning be done as close to the time of acquisition as possible and that it is done thoroughly as the information documented, and the stabilization created at this stage, is the basis for all future use and work on the collection.

An accession can consist of:

- An entire collection of materials acquired at one time.
- A portion of a collection, which when received after an initial accession is called an *addendum* (the terms *accretion* or *accrual* can also be used).
- A single item, such as a rare book or manuscript.

For the purpose of this manual, our main accessioning goals are to achieve two types of control:

Intellectual Control:

- Ensure that legal and physical transfer of materials is complete.
- Begin standardized description of the material for both staff and public use.

Physical Control:

- Determine the collection size and condition.
- Stabilize material housing and labeling.

### 2.A. Preparation

➤ To begin the accession, perform the following tasks:

1. Ensure all documentation has been received and is properly filed in the Control File for that collection. Documentation should include a signed Deed of Gift as well as any addendum to that Deed. It may also include correspondence with the donor and any inventories or lists that have been previously created.
2. Verify that the physical contents match the description in the donation documentation. If anything seems missing, additional, or unaccounted for, we will need to get in touch with the donor.
3. Create a digital Processing Folder for the collection. The folder should include copies of materials from the Control File (these should be clearly labeled or named as copies,

while the original(s) will remain in the Control File). This folder should be saved to the fileshare under the proper unit's **Collections** file.

## 2.B. Record Accession Data

► Record answers for all of the following required fields in the accessions spreadsheet for the current year. Some fields have detailed directions below this chart.

Field Name	Instructions
Accession title (required)	<p>Name the accession based on the description of the material on the Deed of Gift, or, if it is a transfer, name it based on the contents. In order to easily distinguish the two, the accession name should not be the same as the collection title to which it belongs. An accession title is often more specific than a collection name and does not follow the titling protocols of DACS.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stephen Whitfield professional files</li> <li>• Department of Economics correspondence and memos</li> <li>• Louis Brandeis collection material: five lacquer audio discs recordings of Louis Brandeis</li> <li>• Art Green papers [June 2018 Addendum]</li> <li>• Edward K. Kaplan collection of 19th century French philosophy books</li> </ul>
Accession number (required)	<p>Create an accession number consisting of two or three parts separated by a decimal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The calendar year in which a collection is accessioned.</li> <li>2. The consecutive number in which it was received by the unit.</li> <li>3. For University Archives materials add ".UA" at the end of each accession number.</li> </ol> <p>For example: 2020.03 is a Special Collections item which was the 3rd accession in the calendar year for that unit.</p> <p>2020.03.UA are University Archives materials which were the 3rd accession in the calendar year for that unit.</p>



Field Name	Instructions
Accession date (required)	Enter the date that the accession record is being made. Use the format YYYY-MM-DD.
Description (required)	Enter a brief summary description of the materials. This can be the same as what is written on the deed of gift. A good local practice is to compose this as <b>[Name of collection]: [description of material]</b> .
Dates	If known, enter the bulk dates of all materials in the collection. You may use <b>circa</b> or <b>Approximate</b> if the date is uncertain.
Disposition (Required)	State <b>one</b> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name of collection(s) into which the accession will be placed.</li> <li>• What new collection has been created (see Chapter 2 section 2.E. Assign the Collection Name and Number).</li> <li>• If the accession does not yet have a final disposition, state where in storage the materials are being held.</li> </ul>
Inventory	If a preliminary box, series, folder, or item list was provided upon donation or created during the acquisition, indicate the location of the list in this field. Alternatively, if it is a short list, you can paste the list into this field.
<u>Provenance</u> (required)	Provide information about the creation of the materials in the accession, including custodial history and acquisition information. Be sure to include the full names of creators, donors, and transfer contacts. Refer to Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes for full directions on creating provenance statements.  Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collected and delivered by Dr. Gordon Fellman.</li> <li>• From the personal collection of Arlan Ettinger.</li> <li>• Collected from the Shiffman basement, originally housed in Bernstein-Marcus.</li> <li>• Transferred by Abigail Smith, Department of Psychology under the direction of Deborah Jones.</li> </ul>

Field Name	Instructions
Creator(s)	List the creator(s) of the materials by name. You do not need to use a Library of Congress Name Authority File version of the name at this point, but if you do please include (LCNAF) beside the name.
Source Name	Name the donor of the material (the <u>provenance</u> statement normally includes this information as well).
Subject(s)	If you know some subjects which should later be included in the public description, name them here. You do not need to use controlled vocabulary at this stage, but if you do, please name the vocabulary beside the name, such as Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) or Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT).
Acquisition type (required)	Choose one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gift</li> <li>• Transfer</li> <li>• Purchase</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Resource type (required)	Choose one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collection: use this for collections that are intentionally assembled. Collection implies that the material was collected.</li> <li>• Records: use this for collections that were created by an organization, institution or corporate body (rather than a person).</li> <li>• Papers: use this for collections that were created by an individual or family.</li> <li>• Publications</li> <li>• Unknown</li> </ul>
Access restrictions	If there are any known access restrictions on this collection, label 1 for yes. If not, label 0 for no. Leave field blank if unknown. Consult Chapter 9. Restricting Materials for more information.
Extent portion (required)	Enter <b>whole</b> or <b>part</b> . If the whole collection can be described as the same type (linear feet if analog, or bytes if electronic). If the collection is a hybrid of analog and electronic materials, enter <b>part</b> followed by the number and extent type of the analog material. After describing the

Field Name	Instructions
	analog part, create a second <b>part</b> followed by the number and type for the electronic material.
Extent number (required)	Enter the number of linear feet or bytes. See Appendix section <u>A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage</u> for physical materials.
Extent type (required)	Choose <b>linear feet</b> for physical materials, and bytes ( <b>gigabytes or megabytes</b> ) for electronic materials.
Condition	Choose <b>one</b> of the following to describe the condition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good</li> <li>• Fair</li> <li>• Poor</li> </ul>
Condition notes	Note any immediately visible preservation issues or materials at risk. See Appendix section A.3. Common Preservation Concerns for more information.
Access restrictions note	If you answered yes to the access restrictions question explain it further in this field. Note particulars where possible. If no specifics are needed (often the case when there are no restrictions) state type of review conducted. For example: <b>Deductive review</b> or <b>Contents reviewed</b> .
<u>Appraisal</u> note	If known appraisal issues are present state them here. Also note if the donor has indicated that some materials need to be appraised. You may also note if appraisal is not needed.
General note	This field can be used for any purpose not suited to the above notes.
Related resource	See Chapter 2 section <u>2.E. Assign the Collection Name and Number</u> , below. If the accession is an addendum, name the parent collection in this field.
Deed received	This field is an accessioner reminder. Mark as yes or no or n/a.
Acknowledgement sent	This field is an accessioner reminder. Mark as yes or no.
In <u>ArchivesSpace</u>	This field is an accessioner reminder. Mark as yes or no.

## 2.C. Stabilize and Label Containers

Collections rarely arrive in a shelf-ready state. Physical collections may be in a variety of conditions on arrival. Rehousing, labeling, and preparing the boxes for use at the point of accession will make all future work with the collection easier and will prevent damage or loss of information.

- Examine the physical collection and decide whether research use of the collection in its current physical state could result in damage to the materials. If the answer is yes, materials will need to be re-boxed. Loose papers should be added to unlabeled folders. If it can be done during accessioning this is helpful. Refer to Appendix section A.3. Common Preservation Concerns for more information.
- Label the boxes and containers. Labels should clearly display the collection name and accession date. Labels can be written on the outside of the box or a sticky label can be used. Box numbers are useful but adding numbers at this stage can be tricky, because we do not want to imply a specific order to the boxes unless we know the order. If the collection has arrived with box numbers, you may keep them as is. If you know the order the boxes should be in, number them accordingly. If there are no box numbers you can number them only if you make a clear obvious note in the file that box numbers have been assigned randomly. Another option is to temporarily use letters of the alphabet instead of numbers, which will automatically distinguish them from final box numbers.

## 2.D. Stabilize Digital Materials

Digital materials require a few extra steps during accessioning to ensure authenticity and durability. These are:

- Performing a virus check
  - Capturing data about the materials including number of files and formats
  - Creating a copy for preservation space
  - Capturing checksums for every file
  - Creating documentation that tracks preservation actions taken over time.
- Follow the steps captured in the *Digital Preservation Workflow*. **\*\*Note that this workflow is undergoing changes and is not available currently\*\***
  - Track digital preservation jobs you have just performed in the *Processing Worksheet*. This list is also available in the [ArchivesSpace](#) Events module, **but it is not currently being used.**

## 2.E. Assign the Collection Name and Number

The name of the collection will need to be recorded next. If the accession consists of a collection which is new to the repository, the collection will need to be newly named and numbered as well.

- Determine the creator(s) of the materials in preparation for recording the name or naming the collection.

*Paraphrased from DACS: The creator of an archival collection is generally considered to be the person(s), family, or organization responsible for creating or compiling the entire collection. The creator could refer to the body responsible for the intellectual or artistic content of a single item. It is important to accurately record the name(s) of the creator(s), in a standardized format, in order to allow for ease of searching. The primary way of ensuring that you are using a standardized form of a personal name is to use a standard vocabulary, such as the Library of Congress Authorities.*

*In the case of a collection with multiple creators, especially those where the acknowledged “creator” is really a compiler, it is important to give credit to those who actually created the materials. This can be accomplished through a reconstruction of the materials’ provenance under the Custodial History note.*

- Determine the Creator using the following steps:

1. Examine documents in the control file to identify the creator(s) of the collection.
2. If creator(s) are not named in the documentation, you will need to speak with the donor of the materials or examine the material itself for this information.
3. Search for the creator(s)’ name in the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF) to confirm the authorized form of the name. If there is no entry for the creator in the LCNAF, you may use the most common name the person used or uses themselves. Note: the cataloging team in CATSS may be able to help with this, or may even be able to create a standardized name for your local catalog or for the LCNAF.
4. Enter the standard form of the name(s) of the creator(s) into your Processing Worksheet.

- Name the collection using the following steps:

- Check the Collection Level Access database to determine if the accession is an addendum to a previously received collection. If yes, the materials can be joined together as one collection under one title.
- If no previous collection name has been assigned, create a collection name based on two factors: First, the creating or collecting entity, and second, the type of material comprising the collection. Instructions for structuring the collection name are:

1. Creating/collecting entity: What is the entity behind the provenance of the materials? Use the form of the name of an organization or person which has been established in the LCNAF. If no authority record exists, use DACS rule 2.3.5 along with 12.1-12.3 for personal names and 14.1-14.3 for corporate bodies.
2. Type of material: Are they records of an organization or a university department, personal papers, or manuscripts? Most collection titles include **records** or **papers** or **collection** at the end. The term **collection** is most often used when the materials have been compiled rather than created by the donor. However, some collections have a more specific scope, in which case words such as **correspondence** or **photographs** may be more helpful than **papers**.
3. All proper nouns should be capitalized and the type of materials should be lowercase.

*Examples: Gordon Fellman papers* (here Gordon and Fellman are capitalized and papers is not). Other possibilities are *Marcel Proust correspondence* or *Carl Van Vechten photographs*.

► Add a new collection to the database and assign the collection number:

1. In the Collection Level Access database, find the next available numbered collection entry for the unit.
2. Insert a new line for the new collection and enter the new collection name.
3. Observe the numbering on that line, and incorporate that number using the following formula: MWaIB + [number]. The number should end up with five digits. So if the number in the database is 318, then the collection number would be MWaIB00318. If this collection is a part of University Archives, add a letter **A** at the end, resulting in a collection number of MWaIB00318A.

► Record the actions you have taken in the Processing Worksheet. Actions you should record include:

- Creation of a new collection.
- Whether title is devised.
- Collection number (MWaIB number).

## 2.F. Create and Accession Record in ArchivesSpace

An accession record should be created in ArchivesSpace for all accepted archival material. The accession record is created by recording metadata in a structured manner in the tool with which it can be linked to related records. Local practice has varied, but moving forward it is advised that all accessions be uploaded in bulk to ArchivesSpace at the end of the calendar year and each accession must then be attached to the collection to which it belongs. Accessions in ArchivesSpace are not published and therefore cannot be viewed except by staff who are logged in.

An accession record can be recorded in ArchivesSpace by using one of two methods:

1. Recording the relevant data directly into the Accession module of ArchivesSpace.
2. Collecting relevant data in a pre-formatted spreadsheet and later uploading that spreadsheet into ArchivesSpace (option 2 is especially useful if you want to upload multiple accessions at one time).

► If uploading accessions in bulk:

- Locate the pre-formatted Accession Upload Spreadsheet.
- Copy the fields above, one spreadsheet row for each accession.
- When bulk uploading accessions the “Resource” field cannot be populated. After the upload, each accession needs to be linked within the accession to the proper **resource**.  
Note: Resource refers to a collection in ArchivesSpace. For more ArchivesSpace terms see Appendix section A.8. ArchivesSpace Vocabulary List.

► If working directly in ArchivesSpace, follow these directions in section 2.F. Create and Accession Record in ArchivesSpace.

## 2.G. Create a Collection Level Stub Record in ArchivesSpace

If the accession is a new collection and a collection level record does not currently exist in ArchivesSpace, then a collection level stub record can be spawned from the ArchivesSpace accession record. This process will automatically populate many fields in the new collection-level record such as title, dates, creator, descriptions, extents, etc. Optionally, if the accession will not be uploaded in ArchivesSpace until a later date, you can create a similar record by directly filling out the fields that follow as a new collection record.

► Create the stub record:

1. Go to the accession record.
2. Click **edit**.
3. From the top of the accession record, select **Spawn---> Resource**.

► Check the following fields after spawning the record and fill in as much information as you can of the following Single-level required elements, as per Chapter 1 of DACS. Note that just using the DACS Single-level required elements does not meet our local requirements for a full minimally processed collection, as detailed in Chapter 4. Minimal Level Processing.

Required Information	ArchiveSpace Field
Title of collection DACS Single Level Required Element	Enter in title field.
Date(s) DACS Single Level Required Element	Enter in Date field. Based on information from the donor or from a quick review of the material, name a bulk date or inclusive date if known. If not, enter <b>unknown</b> .
Extents DACS Single Level Required Element	Record in extent field using linear feet (ideally) or, if not known, in number of boxes and/or objects.
Name of Creator(s) DACS Single Level Required Element	Create Agent record for creator(s). Consult Appendix section A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings and/or the cataloging department.
Scope and Content DACS Single Level Required Element	<p>Located in the notes field, choose the Scope and Content label (this field may already be filled out if you had a Content Description filled out in the accession record).</p> <p>Note: We are encouraging the creation of a very basic Scope and Content note during accessioning, later followed by the expansion of the Scope and Content during Minimal Level Processing.</p>
Access designation DACS Single Level Required Element	Record using the radio button and create a note in the notes field using the Conditions Governing Access label. See Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes for writing this note.
Language and scripts DACS Single Level Required Element	Record in Language and Script fields, based on either donor information or a quick review of the material.

## 2.H. Initial Recommendations for Processing

A recommendation by the accessioner and/or Collections Archivist regarding further processing can be made at this stage, based solely on information gathered during the accessioning process. The recommendation will be the basis for any future work on the collection. The



amount of labor a collection or addendum requires to make it serviceable depends on its unique characteristics. Erring on the side of minimal processing is advisable because a collection can be processed to a more granular level if research demand warrants it.

- Visit and review Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix if you are unfamiliar with the levels of processing as defined.
- Refer to Appendix section A.4. Levels of Processing: Decision-Making Chart in order to make the preliminary decision on a recommended processing level. Keep in mind that portions of the collection may warrant processing to different levels, so note any such suggestions in the Processing Worksheet.
- If the accession is an addendum, refer to Appendix section A.5. MPLP For Addenda for guidance.
- If enough is known about the level of difficulty of processing, you may indicate whether this collection could be processed by: beginner, intermediate, or advanced. When assigning a level of difficulty, do not rely on the size of the collection or the amount of time expected for processing, rather, focus on the complexity of the collection or addendum. You may also consider whether language or specialized subject area is a factor. This may be recorded in the **Processing Recommendation Notes** section of the Processing Worksheet.
- You may want to utilize the Appendix section A.10. OCLC Quick Cost Estimator for Archival Processing created for the ***Total Cost of Stewardship Report and Toolkit*** by OCLC. This spreadsheet tool allows you to estimate the amount of time needed for processing at various levels. This tool uses metrics provided by UCLA and the Archives of American Art. The answer, in the form of a range of estimated hours may be recorded in the Processing Recommendation notes section of the Processing Worksheet.
- Record processing level recommendations and Processing recommendation note in the Processing Worksheet.

## 2.1. Update Documentation

- Update the various documents in the Processing Folder:
  1. Paste accession spreadsheet information into the **Processing Worksheet: Accessions section**.
  2. Fill out the remainder of the **Processing Worksheet** questions which correspond to the directions you have followed in this chapter.
- Place collection or addendum on the **Processing Priorities List** (Located in ClickUp).

# Chapter 3. Survey and Processing Plan

## 3.A. The Processing Worksheet

While you work through the following chapters, you will be filling out a **Processing Worksheet**. This document will guide you through the initial survey of the collection, and later it will serve as your processing plan and a place for you to draft your archival description. For the initial part of this chapter you will use it to note down answers to the survey questions. Remember, the more information you collect in this worksheet, the easier it will be to describe the collection, but keep in mind also that it is a living document that can, and will, change.

► Read through the **Survey** section of the **Processing Worksheet** and familiarize yourself with the note-taking fields. Proceed to the next section to begin conducting an archival survey of the collection.

## 3.B. Conduct the Survey

### Getting Started

The survey is the basis of all future processing work on the collection, and the results will help in making important decisions on how the collection should be handled. The survey process is twofold. It involves:

1. A consultation of existing documentation and independent research to gather provenance and background information about the materials.
2. A physical inspection of the collection.

Access to legacy documents and archival control files will be provided your supervisor. Note: a shorter version of the survey can be found in Chapter 4. Minimal Level Processing the Minimal- and Full- level processing chapters. The shorter version is used when a larger survey is not possible or if an in-depth survey was previously done by another person.

### Consult Legacy Documentation

The first step in conducting a processing survey is to gather background and provenance information about the collection. The best way to do this is to read the archival control file. This file will include various documents describing who donated the collection, what person or organization actually created/collected the materials, and where the materials have been held since their creation/accrual. Additionally, donor- or accessioner-created inventories may also be present, which will provide processors with a way to confirm that the entire donation is present. Finally, it is possible that some level of processing work may have already begun on the collection, and inventories, processing plans, or survey notes from previous processors may be

included. The accessioner or a previous processor may have even suggested a level of processing for the collection, and preliminary series or groupings may have already been drawn up.

► Search in [ArchivesSpace](#) to see if there is an Accession record for the collection. If so, be sure to consult that information during your document survey.

► Use the questions in the chart below to guide you through your review of various types of existing documentation. Take notes and record answers to the questions in the Survey section of the Processing Worksheet.

Document Type	Relevant Information to look for
Deed of Gift  (often not available for University records)	Who or what does the collection document? Is there a summary of the contents of the collection? Who donated the collection? Has anyone identified any restricted materials? Are the copyright holder(s) identified?
Donor/ transfer correspondence	Are they organizational records, personal papers, or some combination of the two? Who were the creator(s) of the collection and its materials? [For University records name the department and any major creators of materials in the collection] Was the collection created or compiled? [for University records the answer is always <b>created</b> ] When were the materials created [or for compiled collections, when was it compiled by the donor]? When and why was the collection donated to your repository? Is there a summary of the contents of the collection? Is there any mention of confidential or restricted materials?
Collection inventories	Is there a full or partial inventory of the materials? What are the primary subject(s) and persons(s) documented in the collection?
Accession Records	Did the accessioner create any description for the material? Did the accessioner note any administrative needs for the collection (restrictions work, preservations concerns, etc.)? Did the accessioner recommend a level of processing?
Legacy processing plan or collection notes	All information in these documents is potentially helpful, consider what to re-use and what areas need further work. Do note any previous processor names and dates, if known.

*Note: Once you have consulted the legacy documentation, you will be familiar with the creator and subjects of the collection. It is important to identify the creator of the collection, as that person or entity is usually the defining figure in the collection--they are generally considered to be the person(s), family, or organization responsible for creating or compiling the entire collection. However, the creator could also refer to the body responsible for the intellectual or artistic content of a single item. In the case of a collection that is a compilation of items created by various people, the major figure in the collection is often really a compiler and not actually a creator, though they may still be listed as the collection's "creator." In the case of a collection with multiple creators, especially those where the acknowledged "creator" is really a compiler, it is important to give credit to those who actually created the materials. This can be accomplished through a reconstruction of the materials' provenance under the Custodial History note.*

## Do Research

Supplemental research will provide context for arranging the collection, as well as for describing the materials later on in the processing workflow. Your search might also point you towards existing scholarship about the subjects and figures in the collection, which would assist you in writing a descriptive biography or organizational history.

► Conduct internet searches for terms related to the creator and subjects of the collection. Take notes in the Processing Worksheet about your search results, and retain source information for later reference and citation. Some questions you might seek to answer are as follows:

- What is the existing scholarship on the figures in the collection—are there significant publications by or about figures in the collection (biographies, bibliographies, etc.)?
- What are the significant dates and events in the lives of the people represented in the collection (birth, death, appointments, etc.)?
- What are the significant dates and events in the history of any organization or administrative unit (establishment, reorganization, etc.) represented in the collection?

## Survey the Collection Contents

The best way to fully grasp the context of a collection, and to prepare for processing it, is to conduct a physical survey of the materials. The survey stage is all about identifying the existing characteristics of the collection, in order to decide the level of processing that you will impose upon it.

► Review the existing container labels. There may be useful information regarding container contents, accessions or donors, the type and quantity of materials in the containers.

► Open each box and examine its contents. Consider the collection in terms of the questions in the following charts. Note your answers to the questions on the **Processing Worksheet**. The questions have been divided between:

1. Identifying the physical attributes of the collection.
2. Intellectual information gathering.

Together these will allow for the planning of both archival arrangement and description.

► You may want to consider keeping notes on the types of content in each box as you are surveying the collection. Things to consider taking notes on include categories of topics and types of records you are observing.

## Physical Information

Questions	Helpful Hints
Does the collection have any immediate preservation concerns, or ones that may worsen in the future (mold, unstable boxes, extensive acidity or rust, etc.)?	See Appendix section <a href="#">A.3. Common Preservation Concerns</a> .
Does the collection seem to be in its <u>original order</u> or has someone (either the creator or someone else) imposed the current order? If there is an inventory, does it match the physical order of the materials?	Does the collection order appear: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a functional order likely created and maintained by the creator?</li> <li>2. In a revised order created for the purpose of archiving, either by the creator or another?</li> <li>3. Disordered, which may suggest disturbance of the creator's original file structure or disturbance from the packing and shipping process?</li> </ol>
What sort of organization scheme, if any, is currently present in the materials (alpha-numeric, topical, chronological, etc.) and is it consistent throughout the collection?	
Are all materials in file folders?	Even if files folders are not labeled or are messy, having loose paper is more problematic.
Are there records of unusual size or format present?	Look for items that seem too big or too small for the containers. Are oversize materials being damaged by their containers? Are small pieces likely to be lost?

Questions	Helpful Hints
What is the current extent (size) of the collection in linear feet?	1 brown box (record center box) = 1 linear foot 1 grey box (Hollinger/manuscript box) = 0.5 linear feet. See Appendix section A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage for further information. Note: The collection extent may change through processing. Make sure to update your notes to reflect this.
What formats of materials are present (books, audio tapes, etc.)?	

## Intellectual Information

### *People / Subjects*

Questions	Helpful Hints
What are the major figures or major events documented in the collection? Who are the frequent or prominent correspondents, authors, or content creators?	
What are the major subjects and research strengths of the collection?	
Is there information present that could be used to write a biography or history?	Some collections contain resumes or curriculum vitae, biographies, copies of published biographies, etc.
Is there evidence of missing items or gaps in the records?	Are there gaps in the date range of correspondence, or in an alphabetical arrangement are you missing all the records after the letter M?
Does some of the material not seem to fit, intellectually, with the rest of the collection? Is there anything in the collection that looks like it doesn't belong or that was included accidentally? Are there obvious sections of duplicate records?	Your supervisor may consider deaccessioning these items (removing them from the collection). Take note and bring it to their attention.

Questions	Helpful Hints
Do the records present match available inventories or detailed descriptions you have available?	
Are the folder titles accurate and meaningful?	Some folders may have been re-used or the correct label may have fallen off. Do labels appear to be genuine? Are label titles useful to anyone who is not the original creator or user of files?
Do existing box labels contain accurate dates, box numbers, or other descriptive information?	

## Dates

Questions	Helpful Hints
What are the earliest and latest dates of the materials (known as inclusive dates)?	
What are the earliest and latest dates of the bulk of the materials (known as bulk dates)?	If bulk dates cannot be quickly determined, this work can be saved for later processing steps

## Restrictions

Questions	Helpful Hints
Are there any records which appear to be confidential or sensitive?	These may include student grades, letters of recommendation, medical records, personnel records, or other confidential information.  See Chapter 9. Restricting Materials
Are the potential restrictions complex in nature?	Restrictions are considered complex when there are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different reasons for potential restrictions.</li> <li>• Different locations of potential restricted material throughout the collection.</li> </ul>

Questions	Helpful Hints
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive amounts of potentially restricted materials.</li> </ul>

## Final Considerations

Questions	Helpful Hints
Does the current arrangement allow for reasonable access to the information in the papers, or should it be physically rearranged?	
Based on your survey, could this collection be a candidate for immediate access?	Could a researcher use this collection as it is now, with minimal or no processing? Share your findings with your supervisor to decide this.

## 3.C. Processing Levels

### About Levels of Processing

Once you have completed the survey process, you will be able to decide on the level of processing to perform on the collection. Collections may be arranged and described at varying levels of detail; the levels usually utilized at Brandeis are: the collection level, the series level, the box level, the folder level, or (very rarely) the item level. Some collections may be described using multiple levels, with some areas described in great detail and others more broadly. These levels of processing are referred to in archival circles as either single- or multi-level processing. Single-level processing is done when the materials are processed at the collection level. This means that any arrangement and description are done to the collection as a whole (see Chapter 4. Minimal Level Processing).

Multi-level processing is processing performed at one of the more detailed levels (series, box, folder, etc.), in such a way as to show archival hierarchies. Multi-level description is specifically defined by the Society of American Archivists as *“a finding aid or other access tool that consists of separate, interrelated descriptions of the whole and its parts, reflecting the hierarchy of the materials being described.”*

► Consider Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix, which explains the actions that occur at each level of processing. Comparing this chart with the characteristics you’ve identified in the collection will help you to decide which level of processing to choose for your project.



## Deciding on a Processing Level

When choosing what level of processing to perform on a collection, you will be consulting with your supervisor as well as your survey notes. It is important to remember that you should aim to process a collection enough to make it usable by researchers, but that this does not always mean you must do a high level of processing. The goal is to provide a researcher with enough detail to be able to use the collection effectively. While a collection which has been completely reboxed and refoldered with an accompanying list of every folder and date may seem like the ideal, such treatment of collections has limited our ability to provide even minimal access to our full range of collections in the past. The decision as to the level of processing should directly relate to the type of material (manuscript vs. records), the condition of the collection when it has arrived (jumbled to highly ordered), the size of the collection, the expected use of the collection, and many other factors. Final decisions on processing levels will be made in consultation with your supervisor, but the decision will be impacted by the observations that the processor makes when surveying the collection.

► Consult Appendix section [A.4. Levels of Processing: Decision-Making Chart](#) to assist you in making your final recommendation of processing level. Once you have reviewed both the Levels of Processing Matrix and the Levels of Processing Levels of Processing Decision-Making Chart against the attributes you noted during your survey of the collection, you should discuss your decision with your supervisor before continuing.

### 3.D. Create a Processing Plan

Now that you have consulted both the Levels of Processing Matrix and the Levels of Processing Decision-Making Chart, compared them to your survey notes, and spoken to your supervisor, you will have settled on a level of processing for your project. Armed with this decision, as well as the compiled results of your survey, you can now fill out the **Processing Plan** section of the **Processing Worksheet**. The Processing Plan is a formal way of summarizing the processing actions you will carry out on the collection. It provides scope and continuity assurance for the collection. If your project were to get interrupted for any reason, this document will serve as a record of decisions made and actions taken. It will also be a living document that will accompany you throughout your processing work. For this reason, you can expect the document to change, and you are encouraged to note any questions and decisions that come up for you along the way.

► Read through the Processing Plan section of the Processing Worksheet and fill in the fields. Most information will be easily answered from your survey notes or information provided by your supervisor, but some fields will require you to lay out your own ideas for bringing the collection under control.

► The Processing Plan will ask you to think about the current order of materials in the collection (also known as its physical arrangement) and your recommendations for keeping or changing

that order. Previously created inventories and/or any notes you have been taking on the subjects and record types in the collection will be useful for this task. Consider: If you were a researcher, what organizational scheme would make the collection easy to use? Explain this in the **Proposed Arrangement** field in the Processing Plan section of the Worksheet. Final arrangement decisions will be treated in more detail later in the process, but you can use this question in the Plan to make a suggestion based on your current knowledge of the collection.

*For more information about arrangement, please refer to Introduction section [I.C. Definitions and Basic Archival Concepts](#).*

### 3.E. Save and Share Documentation

The **Processing Worksheet** that you have been completing is extremely important for tracking the work you have performed. As mentioned above, you will continue to use this document throughout processing to take notes, record arrangement and descriptive decisions, and even draft descriptive notes. Further, this document will be crucial for providing legacy documentation of your progress with the collection, should your work get interrupted for any reason.

► Save your Processing Worksheet to the Processing folder in the Archives fileshare so that your supervisor can access the document in the future.

### 3.F. Proceed to Chosen Processing Level

► Depending on the level of processing you chose in the above sections, and if directed to start processing, proceed to either Chapter 4. Minimal Level Processing (for Level 1, Collection Level Processing) or [Chapter 5. Full Level Processing](#) (for Levels 2-5, Box - Item Level Processing), and follow the directions there to begin processing.

## Chapter 4. Minimal Level Processing

Minimal Level Processing corresponds to Level 1 on the Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix. You will often see this level associated with creating collection-level finding aids, also called a single-level record for archival collections.

**IMPORTANT:** This chapter assumes your processing job is for a new collection. If you are processing an addendum to an already processed collection, please see Appendix section [A.5. MPLP For Addenda](#). This appendix will help you and your supervisor decide how integrated the addendum will be with the existing collection. You will return to these Minimal Level Processing steps to implement it.

### 4.A. Preparation

If you have entered the Minimal Level Processing stage immediately after the survey from [Chapter 3. Survey and Processing Plan](#), you will be able to skip some duplicative steps in this preparation. These steps are the **Consult Legacy Documentation, Do Research, and Conduct the Survey** sections of this chapter. If you have already completed the survey start at Chapter 4 section [4.B. Appraisal](#).

### The Processing Worksheet

The Processing Worksheet should be filled out throughout Minimum Level Processing.

► Begin by filling out the portions for the name of processor and the date processing has started. Proceed with filling out the worksheet though this entire workflow.

### Consult Legacy Documentation

► Gather background and provenance information about the collection by consulting documentation in the control file, Processing Folder, and Processing Worksheet (if you do not have access to any of the above please ask your supervisor). Use the questions in the chart below to guide you through a brief review of these specific types of existing documentation. Record the answers in the Survey section of the **Processing Worksheet**.

Document Type	Relevant Information to look for
Deed of Gift (often not available for University records)	Who or what does the collection document? Who donated the collection? Has anyone identified any restricted materials?

Document Type	Relevant Information to look for
Donor/ transfer correspondence	<p>Are they organizational records, personal papers, or some combination of the two?</p> <p>Who were the creator(s) of the collection and its materials? [note: For University records name the department and any major creators of materials in the collection]</p> <p>Was the collection created or compiled? [note: University records answer is always <b>created</b>]</p> <p>When were the materials created [or for compiled collections, when was it compiled by the donor]?</p> <p>Is there a summary of the contents of the collection?</p> <p>Is there any mention of confidential or restricted materials?</p>
Collection inventories	<p>Is there a full or partial inventory of the materials?</p> <p>What are the primary subject(s) and persons(s) documented in the collection?</p>
Accession Records	<p>Did the accessioner create any description for the material?</p> <p>Did the accessioner note any administrative needs for the collection (restrictions work, preservations concerns, etc.)?</p>
Legacy processing plan or collection notes	<p>All information in these documents is potentially helpful, consider what to re-use and what areas need further work. Do note any previous processor names and dates, if known.</p>

## Do Research

► A thorough survey requires research into the subjects of the collection, but for a brief survey you need to consult research sources only to answer basic questions which were not answered by the documentation. If you still have uncertainty around the general subject area or person, feel free to do some brief internet research to familiarize yourself. No general research is needed at this stage however.

## Conduct the Survey

► The best way to prepare for processing is to conduct a physical survey of the materials. Open each box and briefly examine the contents. Consider the collection in terms of the questions in the following charts. Note your answers to the questions on the **Processing Worksheet**. The questions have been divided between identifying the physical attributes of the collection and intellectual information gathering. Processors should also review the existing container labels. There may be useful information regarding container contents, accessions or donors, the type and quantity of materials in the containers, etc.

## Physical Information

Questions	Helpful Hints
Does the collection have any immediate preservation concerns, or ones that may worsen in the future (mold, unstable boxes, extensive acidity or rust, etc.)?	See appendix for common preservation issues.
What sort of organizational scheme, if any, is currently present in the materials (alpha-numeric, topical, chronological, etc.) and is it consistent throughout the collection?	
Are all materials in file folders?	Even if files folders are not labeled or are messy, having loose paper is more problematic
What is the current extent (size) of the collection in linear feet and/or bytes (megabytes, terrabytes)?	<p>1 brown box (record center box) = 1 linear foot  1 grey box (Hollinger/manuscript box) = 0.5 linear feet.</p> <p>See Appendix section <a href="#">A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage</a> for further information on physical measurements.</p> <p>Note: The collection extent may change through processing, make sure to update your notes to reflect this.</p>

## Intellectual Information

### *People / Subjects*

Questions	Helpful Hints
What are the major figures or major events documented in the collection? Who are the frequent or prominent correspondents, authors / content creators?	Consult the documentation first for this information. If it cannot be found there you can review just enough material to get this information.
What are the major subjects and research strengths of the collection?	
Do existing box labels contain accurate dates, box numbers, or other descriptive information?	Consider whether to retain or alter information already written on boxes to reduce future confusion

## Dates

Questions	Helpful Hints
What are the earliest and latest dates of the materials (also known as inclusive dates)?	

## Final Considerations

Questions	Helpful Hints
Based on your survey, could this collection be a candidate for immediate access?	Could a researcher use this collection as it is now, with minimal or no processing? Share your findings with your supervisor to decide this.

## Important Note About the Simultaneous Nature of Processing:

*Sections 4.B through 4.E. cover areas of archival work which are often done simultaneously. An experienced processor should read through the following and decide which may be done together and which might best be completed as a separate job. It is recommended that you read through those sections of this chapter before commencing this work.*

## 4.B. Appraisal

In archives, appraisal refers to evaluating the relevance of the material to research. If during the survey or minimal processing unwanted materials are found, it is a good time to consider whether weeding is needed. Only consider large groupings of material that are immediately apparent, such as entire boxes. (More in-depth appraisal is covered in the Full Processing section.)

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Appraisal Actions
1	Collection Level	► If there are large groups of material which have qualities listed below, consider transfer, return, or disposal.

► For each of the following, note items and their locations and report them to the supervisor.

- **Publications:** These are sometimes kept as part of a collection or removed and cataloged separately. Some publications may be considered not worth keeping.
- **Duplicates:** Excessive duplicates may be found. Do not spend a lot of time hunting for duplicates.
- **Unrelated materials:** Materials which seem to have no relation to the collection may be found.

► A supervisor/ processing manager may instruct you to separate these materials from the collection. Record any appraisal actions taken in the Processing Worksheet.

## 4.C. Basic Information

The following chart outlines the descriptive elements necessary to create a minimal finding aid record, also called a collection-level finding aid.

► Go through each descriptive element and record your results in the **Processing Worksheet**. Elements with no requirement status are optional, the others are required.

Element	Information and Action
Title <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i>	<p>The collection title is almost always assigned during the accession process.</p> <p>► Acquire the title from previous documentation or from supervisor.</p> <p>If needed, additional information on titling can be found in Chapter 6 section <u>6.C. Dates</u>.</p>
Identifier <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i>	<p>This is the collection number, typically assigned during the acquisition process. All identifiers begin with <b>MWaiB</b>.</p> <p>► Acquire the ID number from previous documentation or from supervisor (directions for creating this number are located in Chapter 2 section <u>2.E. Assign the Collection Name and Number</u>).</p>
Level of Description <i>ArchivesSpace Required Field</i>	<p>► Always answer <b>collection</b> in this field. This means that the finding aid is beginning at the collection level, and not at a lower one.</p>
Resource Type <i>ArchivesSpace Required Field</i>	<p>► Choose one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Collection</b>: use this for collections that are intentionally assembled and were not the original creations of the collector.</li> <li>• <b>Records</b>: use this for collections that were created by an organization, institution or corporate body (rather than a person).</li> <li>• <b>Papers</b>: use this for collections that were created by an individual or family.</li> <li>• <b>Publications</b></li> </ul>
Language <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i>	<p>► Select the predominant language of the materials being described. List the other languages represented in the Scope and Content note. Consult <u>DACS 4.5</u> for more information.</p>



Element	Information and Action
Classification <i>Locally Required</i>	<p>► Enter a Classification. Classification refers to the larger grouping of materials within the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Special Collections materials are classified as <b>Special Collections</b>.</li> <li>• University Archives materials will be one of the following: <b>Alumni Collections, Conferring Functions, Cultural Activities, Faculty Collections, Public Outreach, Research Functions, Sound and Moving Images, Student Activities, Subject Collections, Sustaining Functions, or Teaching Functions</b>.</li> </ul> <p>If you are not sure which category the collection falls under, ask your supervisor.</p>

## 4.D. Arrangement

Physical re-arrangement is not conducted during minimal processing, the work is primarily about observation and identification of the present arrangement.

► Leave all materials where you find them. (**An exception:** you may separate material which pose a significant physical threat to nearby material, or to human safety. Make sure to note where it was previously located.)

► Create an Arrangement Note using the following directions:

Element	Information and Action
Arrangement Note <i>Locally required element</i>	<p>► Consult the previous documentation. Notice whether any arrangement scheme has been previously identified.</p> <p>► If no arrangement scheme has been previously identified or if there is doubt as to accuracy of previous records, make a quick observation of the collection. Not a lot of time should be spent on this for a minimal processing job, glance at box and folder titles to see if you can identify any existing order.</p>

Element	Information and Action
	➤ Proceed to Chapter 6 section <a href="#">6.E. Finding Aid Notes</a> to write an Arrangement note.

## 4.E. Preservation and Physical Processing

### Preservation

For Minimal Level Processing, preservation concerns are focused on immediate threats to the materials. Minimally processed materials do not receive preservation work unless there are immediate threats to the collection or if the materials could not be safely handled by a researcher. (More in-depth preservation work is detailed in [Chapter 5. Full Level Processing](#).)

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Action
1	Collection Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Review collection for immediate preservation threats such as insects, mold, fragile materials.</li> <li>➤ Rehouse only if the housing is unstable.</li> <li>➤ Refolder only if severe condition issues are present.</li> </ul>

➤ Make your preservation evaluation based on the **Immediate Threat Scan** in Appendix section [A.3. Common Preservation Concerns](#).

➤ Note your findings in the **Processing Worksheet**.

➤ Report all immediate preservation concerns to the supervisor, who may then direct you to take action, such as reboxing or foldering. Directions for basic rehousing will be provided to the processor as a training. Some preservation work directions can be found in the department's Preservation Manual.

➤ Record any actions taken in the **Processing Worksheet**.

➤ If certain boxes of the collection need to be closed until further preservation work can be done, this should be recorded in the **Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements Note** (see Chapter 6 section [6.E. Finding Aid Notes](#)).

## Physical Processing

During collection-level processing very little work is done to the physical materials in addition to any immediate preservation steps. However, at the bare minimum you should ensure the following:

- Physical boxes have been labeled appropriately. See Chapter 6 section [6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders](#) for directions on labeling boxes.
- Materials are placed in the box so that one item may be taken out at a time. It is ideal for materials such as folders, binders, and publications to be placed vertically in their boxes so that researchers do not need to pile up materials on the desk in order to get to what is beneath.
- Loose papers are placed in new blank folders. This is only for handling purposes, so do not be concerned that the materials might not be otherwise related.

► Record any physical processing actions taken on the Processing Worksheet.

► Consider whether the following note is required:

Element	Information and Action
Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>This note should only be used if the physical condition of a collection would cause harm to the material <i>or</i> if special technology or verifications are needed to view electronic material.</p> <p>► Observe the condition of the collection. Ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In its current condition, can the physical collection withstand research use? For example, can boxes and folders be handled without falling apart?</li><li>• Can electronic materials be accessed through the open web and without special equipment, software, logins etc.?</li></ul> <p>► If there are special physical or technical requirements, proceed to Chapter 6 section <a href="#">6.E. Finding Aid Notes</a> to develop this note.</p>

## 4.F. Description: Narrative Descriptive Notes

Collection narration is one of two types of description created during processing, and is designed to complement the final inventory. Collection Narration does not dramatically differ depending on processing level. This is because narration is always necessary to ensure that users of the material understand the context, history, and availability of material.

► Create the following two notes for the collection using the following directions:

- Scope and Content note
- Custodial History note

Element	Information and Action
Scope and Content Note <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i>	<p>This narrative field is a summary description of the collection as a whole. The purpose is to provide the context of the materials in the collection. This note should either be created or updated at this stage.</p> <p>► Search for an existing Scope and Content note in the collection documentation or in a previously published finding aid if there is one.</p> <p>► Examine any existing note in light of any new information which you gain through minimal processing. Note that if you are processing an addendum to an existing collection, you need to update the existing Scope and Content note based on your knowledge of the addendum.</p> <p>► Create or update the note in the <b>Processing Worksheet</b>. For full directions on writing this note, follow the directions in Chapter 6 section <u><a href="#">6.E. Finding Aid Notes</a></u>.</p>
Custodial History Note <i>Locally Required</i>	<p>All collections have a custodial history. This note contains the public version of what in archives we call <u>provenance</u>, as well as any timelines of ownership or custody of the collection.</p>

Element	Information and Action
	<p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section <a href="#">6.E. Finding Aid Notes</a> for instructions on how to write this note.</p>

## 4.G. Description: Inventory

An inventory is a list of materials in the accession or collection. Such a list may have been provided by the donor or created during the acquisition or accessioning process, particularly if it is a small amount of material. Documentation should be checked for the existence of such an inventory, and this should be checked for thoroughness and accuracy.

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Action
1	Collection Level	<p>► Retain existing folder titles.</p> <p>► Create a collection-level finding aid in ArchivesSpace.</p>

As can be seen in the chart, a collection level finding aid is all that is required in minimal processing, which would imply that no inventory is being created. However, if an inventory already exists, especially in digital form, the processor should at this point review it to see if it is suitable to be shared publicly. Some of the most common problems with existing inventories include, but are not limited to:

- Inventory may be incomplete.
- Inventory may describe more or less material than has actually been received.
- The order provided was relevant to the materials' original housing, but was messed up in the packing and shipping process.
- The inventory was self-referential for the creator and does not make sense to others.

► If the inventory is deemed suitable and helpful, the list should be formatted into a spreadsheet. See directions in [Chapter 7. Entering Finding Aid Data Using an Upload Spreadsheet](#).

► If no inventory exists or if the inventory is not adequate, move on to the next section.

## 4.H. Dates and Extent

Once you have accomplished most of the processing work, you are ready to declare dates and extents for the whole collection. You may have already created dates at the box level, and you

may have information on dates from previous documentation. You will use this information to help create an inclusive date. An inclusive date range is required for all levels of processing. Extent is used to record information about the size of the collection.

► Create your dates and extents for the collection as a whole and record these in the Processing Worksheet using the following directions:

Element	Information and Action
<p>Dates <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i></p>	<p>This field requires the inclusive date range for the collection as a whole.</p> <p>► Create an inclusive date by following these instructions in Chapter 6 section <u>6.C. Dates</u>. <b>IMPORTANT:</b> You will want to follow the minimal standard, so rely on previous documentation if possible. If prior information does not exist or is questionable then briefly examine boxes to create an estimated inclusive date range.</p>
<p>Extent <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i></p>	<p>The extent of a collection refers to the amount or size of material in a collection. It allows researchers to make judgments about the amount of information they will have to consult during their research.</p> <p>► For physical boxes, assess and record the number of linear feet for the collection. When calculating linear feet keep the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 brown box (record center box) = 1 linear foot</li> <li>• 1 grey box (Hollinger/manuscript box) = .5 linear feet.</li> </ul> <p><u>See Appendix section A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage for further information about extents.</u></p> <p>► For electronic collections report the extent in bytes (megabytes, gigabytes, etc.).</p>

Element	Information and Action
	<p>► For hybrid collections with both types of materials, create two extent statements (one for physical and one for electronic). If the size of the electronic material is not known, use <b>unknown</b> to note the presence of such material.</p>

## 4.I. Agents and Subjects

Agent records contain the standardized form of a personal, organizational, or institutional name. Subject records contain the standardized form of topics in a collection. They are both created by consulting resources which document standardized cataloging conventions.

Element	Information and Action
Agent: Creator or Collector <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i>	<p>► Please check with the supervisor as to whether they want you to create agents. In most cases, agents will be created by cataloging librarians after the finding aid has been published.</p> <p>For more information about creating agents, please see Appendix section <a href="#">A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings</a>.</p>
Subjects <i>DACS Single Level Optimum Element</i>	<p>► Please check with the supervisor as to whether they want you to create subjects. In most cases, agents will be created by cataloging librarians after the finding aid has been published.</p> <p>For more information about creating agents, please see Appendix section <a href="#">A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings</a>.</p>

## 4.J. Access Determination and Notes

Archives do not provide access to all the materials it owns at all times. While access is the goal, some materials have restrictions for legal or privacy reasons. Reviewing materials for possible restrictions is often a part of processing, and is conducted to a different degree depending on

the level of processing. There are many reasons for restrictions (for example privacy and legality) and many types of restrictions (a restriction may be on viewing material, copying material, or both). At this stage in minimal processing, the work is to gather information on possible restrictions and to create a note stating the access status of the collection. Archivists are encouraged to err on the side of access, but also have a responsibility to make their best effort to protect privacy and meet legal requirements.

► Create a Conditions Governing Access note for the collection as a whole and record it in the Processing Worksheet using the following directions:

Element	Information and Action
<p>Conditions Governing Access note <i>DACS Single Level Required Element</i></p>	<p>A Conditions Governing Access note should be recorded at this stage, indicating the status of restrictions in a collection. (While preservation status is also an access issue, the work and note about it is in a previous section).</p> <p>► Proceed to <u>Chapter 9. Restricting Materials</u> and follow the steps listed in Option 1 for a minimal level restrictions review.</p> <p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> to choose and record a Conditions Governing Access note that reflects the access status of the collection as a whole.</p>

## 4.K. Processing Information Note

After processing is complete it is essential that the processor create a final note which will be used to explain all work done on the collection. This helps researchers and archivists understand the context of the collection better, and to help plan any future work on the collection.

► Review the steps taken on the collection by reviewing notes you took in the Processing Worksheet. Compile this information in order to create the Processing Information Note, using the following directions:



Element	Information and Action
Processing Information note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>Processing work to record include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconstruction of <u>provenance</u></li> <li>• Reconstruction, maintenance, or alteration of <u>original order</u></li> <li>• Devised titles or retention of existing titles</li> <li>• Weeding</li> </ul> <p>This note is especially important for transparency and patron education.</p> <p>► Follow the directions in Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> for providing accurate statements which describe actions taken on the collection.</p>

## 4.L. Creating a Collection-Level Record in ArchivesSpace

As a processor you may be directed to create, or assist in creating, a public collection level finding aid using the tool ArchivesSpace.

► Proceed to Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace if you are asked to input the information directly into the ArchivesSpace system. You may skip all fields which have not been marked as **required** in the Minimal Descriptive Elements section. Most of the fields you will be directed to create will be copied from the work you have already completed in the Processing Worksheet.

► Finding aid data should be created before publishing:

Element	Information and Action
Finding Aid Data  <i>Locally Required: EAD ID, Finding Aid Title, Finding Aid Date, Finding Aid Author, Language of Description, Finding Aid Note</i>	<p>These fields are used to create a good standard EAD document.</p> <p>► EAD ID: enter the Collection Identifier number. Example: MWaIB02727</p>

Element	Information and Action
	<p>► <b>Finding Aid Title:</b> enter the title of the collection. <i>Example: Nahum Goldmann papers</i></p> <p>► <b>Finding Aid Date:</b> enter the date the finding aid was completed. Follow rules for formulating dates in <a href="#">DACS 2.4</a>.</p> <p>► <b>Finding Aid Author:</b> enter the name of the individual(s) who created the finding aid. You can use the Processing Information note to acknowledge other contributions and contributors.</p> <p>► <b>Language of Description:</b> enter English.</p> <p>► <b>Description Rules:</b> select Describing Archives: A Content Standard.</p> <p>For more information about these elements, see Chapter 4 section <a href="#">4.C. Basic Information</a>.</p>

## Publishing the Finding Aid

Processors should be saving their progress often in [ArchivesSpace](#), but will not publish the finding aid until it has been reviewed by the supervisor. Once a finding aid has been officially approved, it is published by the collections manager by clicking “Publish All” at the collection level record.

## Updating Processing Status

At this stage the Collections Master List for the unit should be updated by the supervisor to reflect the status of processing steps and the finding aid.

## 4.M. Creating a Collection-Level Catalog Record

Cataloguers in the CATSS Department are responsible for creating or updating the catalog record in [OneSearch](#). As a part of this process they can create an authority record for the creator(s) and subject terms based on your Scope and Content note and their own research. Currently, when the collection-level resource record has been completed and is published in

ArchivesSpace, the link to the public finding aid is sent to a member of CATSS. This will be their cue to create or update a catalog record.

## 4.N. Completing Minimal Level Processing

After the catalog record has been completed, the cataloger or supervisor should create the authority and subject records in the finding aid. Refer to the catalog record which has been created and follow directions in Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace to add them to ArchivesSpace.

► Check the minimal level section of the Processing Worksheet to ensure that all appropriate steps have been carried out.

Once the worksheet is complete, the supervisor will make the final determination as to whether the collection can be made available to researchers and will publish (or re-publish) the finding aid.

At this stage the Collections Master List for the unit should again be updated by the supervisor to reflect the status of the processing steps, finding aid, and catalog record.

# Chapter 5. Full Level Processing

For the purpose of this manual and our local practice, Full Level Processing refers to levels 2-5 of the Levels of Processing Matrix. In today's archives, there are many different definitions of a "fully processed collection." A collection may be considered fully processed at the series level if that is sufficient for access to the collection, or, a series level processing job may be part of an iterative approach to processing. Admittedly then, the phrase Full Level Processing is not especially prescriptive or clear, but it will suffice for the purposes of this manual.

Before beginning processing, it is recommended that the collection be closed to research. To completely and efficiently process a collection, the processor(s) must have access to the entire collection for the duration of processing and for both reference and processing to not interfere with the other. Check with the supervisor/ collection manager to find out whether the collection can be temporarily closed. This should then be noted appropriately in the unit's Master Collections List and then communicated to reference staff.

**IMPORTANT:** This chapter assumes your processing job is for a new collection. If you are processing an addendum to an already processed collection, please see [A.5. MPLP For Addenda](#). This appendix will help you and your supervisor decide how integrated the addendum will be with the existing collection and then you will return to these Full-Level Processing steps to implement it.

## 5.A. Preparation

### The Processing Worksheet

The Processing Worksheet will be the place to document all the following surveying and processing steps. If you have been instructed to create an inventory as part of Full Level Processing, consult Chapter 6 section [6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information](#) and discuss the best place to record the finalized inventory when finished.

### Survey and Processing Plan

Preparatory work must be completed before any processing work begins. For a Full Level Processing project, you must conduct all steps as documented in Chapter 3.

► Proceed to Chapter 3 and complete the following steps:

1. Conduct the Survey
2. Description & Processing Levels
3. Deciding on Processing Level
4. Create a Processing Plan
5. Share and Save Documentation

► At the end of Chapter 3. Survey and Processing Plan you are instructed to proceed to your chosen level. Return here to begin Full Level Processing.

## Important Note About the Simultaneous Nature of Processing:

Most of this chapter covers areas of archival work which can be done simultaneously. It is recommended that you read through all sections of this chapter before commencing this work. You can decide which parts may be done together and which might best be completed as separate jobs. That said, processing is often performed as an iterative process, which can be commenced in stages, and sometimes it is best if parts of the work can be held until a later date. You and the supervisor should discuss this after reading through these sections.

## Important Note About Hybrid Treatments in Processing:

Collections do not necessarily need to be processed to the same level throughout their entirety. The choice to apply certain processing steps to different degrees is one which may lead to significant time savings. If you notice that some series, for example, deserve more in-depth description and preservation than the others, this is a good thing to bring up to the supervisor. Similar materials may be described at the box or series/subseries level with little impact on users.

► For each of the following 9 steps, read the overview and then follow the directions according to level of description chosen (*Example Collection level, Series Level, etc.*). The steps are:

1. Appraisal
2. Arrangement
3. Preservation and Physical Processing
4. Basic Information
5. Description: Narrative Description Notes
6. Description: Inventory
7. Dates and Extents
8. Agents and Subjects
9. Access Determination and Notes

## 5.B. Appraisal

You may be asked, as a processor, to conduct appraisal activities. In archives, appraisal refers to the process of determining value in regards to research use. Processors can expect to find material which may have been unintentionally donated, or donated with the understanding that there may be unwanted items present. There may also be materials which were intended to be sent by the donor but which the archive does not wish to keep. There is often not enough time for in-depth appraisal when receiving the collection. An archivist may only be able to appraise

whether we should accept the whole collection, or particular boxes, not whether all folders in the box are relevant to the collection.

The two keys to appraisal are:

1. Understand the relevance of the collection to the institution.
2. Limit your appraisal work to the appropriate level of processing. After your review, materials in question should be brought to the attention of the supervisor for decisions.

Here is a list of the types of material to be identified:

- a. Publications (entire books, magazines, newspapers)
- b. Large amounts of photocopies or scanned material from publications
- c. Photocopies or scanned materials from other archives
- d. Receipts, invoices, and/or small business transactions
- e. Duplicative material (Example extensive copies of reports, or duplicative sets of binders for each meeting attendant)
- f. Ephemeral items (Example office supplies, memorabilia, awards and plaques)
- g. Personal material, if the collection is not meant to include it (Example financial documents)
- h. Blank forms, stationary, and/or envelopes
- i. Note cards or index cards

Processing Level	Appraisal Actions
Level 2 Box Level	If there are particular boxes of material which have qualities listed above, consider transfer, return, or disposal.
Level 3 Series Level	If there are particular series of material which have qualities listed above, consider transfer, return, or disposal.
Level 4 Folder level	If there are ranges of or particular folders which have qualities listed above, consider transfer, return, or disposal.
Level 5 Item Level	If there are particular items which have qualities listed above, consider transfer, return, or disposal.

- Review the collection at the appropriate level according to the chart above, making notes on the locations and nature of the material.
- Discuss your findings with the supervisor, who will decide on any actions to be taken.

► If action is taken, note the actions as specifically as possible in the Processing Worksheet. Include item(s) removed and the date they were removed.

## 5.C. Arrangement

Arrangement refers to the physical and intellectual order of the collection. Having an arrangement section in the manual may imply that re-arranging materials is always conducted when processing a collection, but this is not the case. Rather, making changes to how the collection has arrived is a choice based on the results of the survey. You will rely on the chosen processing level to define the broad strokes of the arrangement work.

► Review the definitions related to principles of arrangement, which are located in the Introduction. These are: provenance and original order. These concepts can help guide your arrangement work.

Some things to keep in mind regarding arrangement (this content is based on recommendations from the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries or PACSCL):

- An archival collection has both an intellectual and a physical arrangement. Some collections arrive in the archive in a physical order which implies a plausible intellectual order. Some collections arrive in a seemingly meaningless intellectual order. Observing the current physical order to ascertain whether an intellectual order currently exists is the first step.
- Physical arrangement refers to the physical order of the materials in the collection. The collection will arrive in a physical order which may differ from the order in which files were kept, due to the fact that items were shuffled when packed and transferred. Occasionally, physical arrangement of some material may be determined by the size, shape, and type and housing needed regardless of the information provided therein. Physical proximity may or may not equal intellectual relationship.
- Intellectual arrangement applies to the information contained in an archival collection, and necessitates an understanding of the intellectual relationship(s) between the various parts. To establish an intellectual arrangement, collections can be listed by a particular organizational order, such as chronologically, or it may be divided into series and subseries, with folders and items listed beneath them hierarchically.
- Arrangement can seek to re-establish the order in which materials were originally used (called original order) or may be imposed on the collection to create a new arrangement which will make it easier for the researcher to navigate.
- Collections can be rearranged physically and intellectually, or to save time, they can just be rearranged intellectually in the inventory or finding aid. If only intellectual re-arrangement is chosen, the items are not moved from their place in physical boxes or electronic folders, rather, the current physical order of those materials are kept but the order they are listed in an inventory is modified. This is an MPLP method which should be discussed with the supervisor, and can only be applied if a list of folders and/or items

will be created as part of an inventory (Hint: each folder will name which box they are located in. In these cases, items are located according to the box numbers assigned to them).

- Re-arrangement should not be solely based on media type unless there are special preservation concerns. It can be tempting to place all videos in one place, for example, but if physical re-arrangement is chosen placement should be based on the content and the item's relationship to the other material. [Exceptions: make separations if the media poses a significant physical threat to nearby material (*Example: mold*), to human safety (i.e. broken glass), or has significant research or monetary value in its own right to the degree that separate housing, description, and management is a necessity for preservation, discovery, and use.]

## Arrangement: Box Level

Processing Level	Arrangement Actions
Level 2 Box Level	<b>Intellectual arrangement:</b> Identify whether boxes have themes.  <b>Physical arrangement:</b> The box order can be changed to bring together related materials. Otherwise, retain the order in which collection was received.

At Level 2, also called Box Level processing, you will be recording what, if any, intellectual arrangement the materials are in currently, and possibly switching the order of the boxes according to their contents.

► Conduct box scans for each box in the collection using the following guidance:

1. Examine box labels or text on the box for numbers that imply a box order (they may have arrived with or have subsequently been numbered). Consider whether those numbers should shift based on your observations of the following steps.
2. Examine box labels or text on the box for information about the contents, such as subjects, document types, or dates.
3. Examine folder titles without removing them from the box. If titles are not available, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Note that during box level processing, you will not be checking the accuracy of the folder titles or providing new folder titles.
4. Gather an impression of the types and subjects of materials contained in that box. Keeping notes on contents may be helpful at this stage. Use the information gathered to validate or invalidate any descriptive information written on the box.
5. Look for dates on folders, or, sample every 5-10 folders and review the contents for creation dates. However, do resist examining every folder or every document, and do



not reconstruct dates from the context, rather, rely on actual dates listed on the documents. Processing at the box level only asks that you assign the decades which are covered in the box, and if there is uncertainty around the dates, you may refer to Chapter 6 for help. The term “circa,” for example, can be added to imply an approximate time period.

If the collection is largely well organized but has obvious inconsistencies from the packing process, consult the supervisor to determine whether high-level re-organization is warranted at this stage. For example, it could be that boxes 3, 4, 5, and 8 contain a full set of alphabetical correspondence with 4 being the box containing the start of the alphabet, which means it may be worth taking some time to re-number and list the boxes accordingly.

- Make notes on your arrangement observations and share them with the supervisor.
- Commence any arrangement work agreed upon, if any.

Arrangement work for box level processing can entail either re-ordering an existing box order or creating a new meaningful box order. Box numbers should be recorded in two ways:

1. On the box label (please see Chapter 6 section 6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders for instructions).
2. As a part of an inventory created in Chapter 5 section 5.G. Description: Inventory. Notes on the new box order would suffice if an inventory is not imminent.

- Create or update the arrangement note:

Element	Information and Action
Arrangement Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>This note is used to communicate the arrangement work done on a collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consult previous documentation to see whether an arrangement note was created during the survey. The previous note will mostly likely identify the arrangement prior to processing.</li> <li>➤ Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> to create a new note which encompasses all actions taken on the collection and all observations about the arrangement as it is now.</li> </ul>

- Record all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet.

## Arrangement: Series Level

Processing Level	Arrangement Actions
Level 3 Series Level	<b>Intellectual arrangement:</b> Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its series/subseries. Or, create a new order using series/subseries.  <b>Physical arrangement:</b> Basic reorganization of folders into series OK if necessary.

At processing level 3 or series level processing, intellectual arrangement revolves around series, which are thematic groupings of the materials. See Introduction section I.C. Definitions and Basic Archival Concepts. The Society of American Archivists defines a series in the following way: “a series is nothing more than “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.” A subseries is simply a series within a series.

Here is an example of a series list in a family papers collection:

*Collection name: The DeLaria Family papers*  
*Series 1: Diaries and ephemera, 1900s to 1910s*  
*Series 2: School records, 1920s, 1940s*  
*Series 3: Family correspondence, 1890s-1940s*  
*Series 4: Drawings by Francis DeLaria, undated*

Here is an example of a series inventory in which two different series are broken out into subseries:

*Collection name: Department of Communications records*  
*Series 1: Administrative meeting minutes, 1949-1954*  
*Series 2: Correspondence*  
    *Subseries 1: Individuals, 1950s to 1960s*  
    *Subseries 2: Institutions, 1960s*  
*Series 3: Event photographs, 1970s- 1980s*  
    *Subseries 1: Anniversaries, 1970s*  
    *Subseries 2: Fundraisers, 1980s*  
    *Subseries 3: Holiday parties, 1970s-1980s*  
*Series 4: Personnel files, circa 1970s*  
*Series 5: Publicity files, 1960s, 1980s-1990s*

► Start by briefly reviewing the contents of each box. You will be observing any existing folder titles and dates and creating categories, or series, for the folders to belong to. Here are tips on doing an effective but efficient scan of the collection materials:

- Examine box labels or text on the box for information about the contents, such as subjects, document types, or dates.
- Examine folder titles without removing them from their boxes. If titles are not available, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Note that during series level processing, you will not be checking the accuracy of the folder titles or providing new folder titles.
- Gather an impression of the types and subjects of materials. Keeping notes for types of material in each box may be helpful at this stage.
- Look for dates on folders, or, sample every 5-10 folders and review those for creation dates. However, do resist examining every folder or every document, and do not reconstruct dates from the context, rather, rely on actual dates listed on the documents. Processing at the box level only asks that you assign the decades which are covered in the box, and if there is uncertainty around the dates, you may refer to this section for help. The term **circa**, for example, can be added to imply an approximate time period.
- Remember that series are not determined or limited by the box. You may have several series for a single box, have a series split between two boxes, or have one series which spans several boxes.
- It may take some time to understand the relationship between folders. If you imagine how the creator filed contents for their own personal or office needs this may help.

Keep in mind that a simpler series scheme may be preferable to a more complicated one. In some cases, especially for small collections, a series list may be enough organization, and there is no need to break it down into smaller parts. The example of the DeLaria Family papers above is a good illustration of this. For medium to large collections it may be best to create some subseries within some or all of the series. Subseries may be useful when breaking down very large series (pertaining to several boxes), as this will make the materials more accessible. For example, a collection with a large correspondence series can be broken up into **professional** and **personal** subseries as this will help a researcher identify which materials they need. Remember: you do not have to treat every part of the collection the same, this is not a book outline, but a guide to the collection. Some portions will require more detail.

► Develop a list of categories to which the folders could belong. This is your preliminary list of series. Do not be overly concerned about the series titles, this will be addressed later in the process. If you think that these series should be divided further, add those to the list as well and these will be your preliminary subseries. Confer with the supervisor to develop your final series arrangement.

► Observe the current order of the series and subseries as they occur physically in the boxes (you are not observing the series directly, because there is no physical manifestation, but you are observing the order of the folders.) Answer these questions:

1. Does the order appear to be the same way the creator used the files (see definition of original order)? Some creators order their files with a mixture of alphabetical and chronological order within topical or subject groups. Other creators have created file orders which may only make sense to them.
2. Does the present order of the series have any meaning or logic?
3. Would researchers be able to make sense of the current series order and ascertain where in the collection to look for their item(s) of interest?

► Review your findings with the supervisor. Discuss whether to keep the current order of the materials or to impose a new order on the materials.

If you are not trying to maintain or re-create original order, series may be re-arranged according to the processor's wishes. You may want to group like series together by subject, or to organize series chronologically. Any new prospective series order should be shared with the supervisor before being finalized.

Consider whether to physically or electronically move groups of folders related to each series, or, after consultation, you can choose not to move them but to note their locations in a later inventory or finding aid. In the latter case, intellectual arrangement will always be present in the inventory or finding aid, but not necessarily in the physical arrangement of materials. We do not recommend rearranging all the folders in the series at this level of processing.

► Record the final order of your series list and any subseries you may want to add and finalize them with the supervisor.

► Record your decision on whether and how to reorganize the physical collection based on the new order of the series.

► Commence the arrangement work agreed upon, if any.

Arrangement work for series level processing may entail physically or electronically moving folders so that they are unified with other folders in the series. It may also entail moving the whole series of folders into a different section of the collection in order to match a chosen series order. For physical arrangement work, it can be helpful to use place-holders to temporarily signify the series while folders are being moved around. When you are finished moving materials, make notes on which box numbers contain which series.

- Create or update the arrangement note:

Element	Information and Action
Arrangement Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>This note is used to communicate the arrangement work done on a collection.</p> <p>► Consult previous documentation to see whether an arrangement note was created during the survey. The previous note will mostly likely identify the arrangement prior to processing.</p> <p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes and create a new note which encompasses all actions taken on the collection and all observations about the arrangement as it is now.</p>

- Record all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet

## Arrangement: Folder Level

Processing Level	Arrangement Actions
Level 4 File / Folder Level	<p><b>Intellectual arrangement:</b> Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its folder order. Or, create a new folder order. Series/ subseries may be used.</p> <p><b>Physical arrangement:</b> Reorganization of folders OK if necessary.</p>

In level 4 processing, also called folder level processing, you are concerned with the order of folders within either one or two levels of hierarchy, either:

1. The arrangement of individual folders within series or subseries.
2. The arrangement of individual folders in the collection with no series or subseries.

The decision about whether to create series will be based on the complexity of the collection. Most small collections (less than 2 linear feet) are less likely to need series. This is because materials can easily be found by a researcher by examining the boxes or reading through a list of folders in an inventory. An example of a collection which does not need a series list would be

a collection made entirely of draft manuscripts of a particular book, as the folders containing the drafts can simply be named by draft date, and they can be ordered chronologically. Large collections and complex collections benefit from series and/or subseries lists which can direct a researcher to the correct portion of the collection to examine. For example, an author's papers which include drafts, correspondence with publishing companies, biographical materials, and original memoirs could benefit from being organized into series which are named for each of those types of materials.

Here is an example of a list of folders without a series hierarchy:

*Collection name: Robert Smith letters*

*Folder 1: Moody, Daisy, 1918-1934*

*Folder 2: Smith, Johnny, 1920-1922*

*Folder 3: Smith, Michael, 1890-1942*

*Folder 4: Smith, Wyatt, 1918-1922*

*Folder 5: Xavier, Robert, 1920*

Here is an example of a list of folders within a series and subseries hierarchy arrangement:

*Collection name: Department of Communications records*

*Series 1: Administrative meeting minutes*

*Folder: Minutes, 1949-1951*

*Folder: Minutes and notes, 1952-1954*

*Series 2: Correspondence*

*Subseries 1: Individuals*

*Folder: Cooper, Beth, 1952-1956*

*Folder: White, Ian, 1955*

*Folder: McGuinness, Mary, 1961*

*Folder: Locke, Albert, 1967-1969*

*Subseries 2: Institutions*

*Folder: University of Albany, 1958*

*Folder: University of Kentucky, 1958-1959*

*Folder: Church of the Holy Sepulcher, 1966*

*Series 3: Event photographs, 1970s*

*Folder: Founders Day, 1971-1978*

*Folder: 25th Anniversary, 1974*

*Folder: Homecoming, 1978*

► Conduct a folder level scan of the materials. Here are the recommended steps:

1. Examine box labels or text on the box for information about the contents, such as subjects, document types, or dates.
2. Examine the contents of the whole collection to determine whether the majority of folders already have labels. The information on the folder label is considered to be a **given** or

**existing** title, and if the materials have not been processed at all previously, these would likely have been supplied by the creator of materials, a record keeper, or less likely, a donor. If there are none or very few given folder labels you can skip step 3 and proceed to step number 4.

3. Determine whether the given titles are accurate and useful. (They may be inaccurate for a number of reasons, for example, newer labels may have fallen off to reveal old labels, or materials may have been stuck into reused folders with unrelated titles.) Briefly review the titles and contents of a selection of folders. One folder for every 5 to 10 folders should be sufficient. The following types of titles are *not* accurate or useful:
  - a. Titles which have no relationship to the contents of the folder.
  - b. Titles which are too vague to convey folder contents.
  - c. Titles which were useful to only the creator themselves, for example **Ellie's files**, as we do not know who Ellie is, or **personal**, which is a title that might serve an office purpose but it does not describe the contents of the material.
4. Examine folder titles or folder contents throughout the collection to gather an impression of the types, subjects, and approximate dates of materials. If titles do not exist or are inaccurate, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Keeping notes for types of material in each box may be helpful at this stage.

► Decide whether there are categories into which the folders should be divided. If yes, develop a list of categories to which the folders could belong. This is your preliminary list of series. If you think that these should be divided further, add those to the list as well as preliminary subseries. It may take some time to understand the relationship between folders. If you imagine how the creator filed contents for their own personal or office needs this may help. Confer with the supervisor to develop your final series arrangement.

► Observe the order of the individual folders (If you have series and/or subseries, you are observing the order of folders within series and subseries groups. If there are no series or subseries you are observing the relationship of all folders together as a collection.) Answer these questions:

1. Does the order appear to be the same way the creator used the files (see definition of original order)? Some creators order their files with a mixture of alphabetical and chronological order within topical or subject groups. Other creators have created file orders which may only make sense to them.
2. Does the order of the series and their folders have any meaning or logic?
3. Would researchers be able to make sense of the current series and folder order and ascertain where in the collection to look for their item(s) of interest?
4. If adjacent folders are related you may decide to keep that order as the basis for the arrangement. If the folders appear to be haphazard and unrelated, you may decide to impose a new order on the folders. An imposed order is often either alphabetical by folder title or chronological by date of creation, but it could also be topical.

➤ Review your findings with the supervisor. Discuss your plan of whether to keep the current order or to impose a new order on the materials.

➤ Decide to what extent you will physically rearrange the folders. For most folder level processing jobs, even when processors keep the current arrangement, there will be materials that are out of that apparent order. Unless the physical arrangement of the folders matches exactly with your plan, you will need to decide whether to rearrange the physical items or just note their locations in a later inventory.

➤ Commence arrangement work as agreed upon, if any.

Arrangement work for folder level processing may entail physically or electronically moving folders so that they either appear in the right place within the original order, appear correctly in a newly imposed order, or are unified with other folders in the same series and, optionally, are ordered in relation to the other folders in that same series.

If you have series, it can be helpful to use place-holders to temporarily signify the series while folders are being moved around. When you are finished moving materials, make notes on which box numbers contain which series.

**Hint:** folder level processing often involves refolding and relabeling these materials. Sometimes it can be easier to create a final physical rearrangement of materials once refolding and relabeling are done in sections 5.D. and 5.E.

➤ Create or update the arrangement note:

Element	Information and Action
Arrangement Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>This note is used to communicate the arrangement work done on a collection.</p> <p>➤ Consult previous documentation to see whether an arrangement note was created during the survey. The previous note will mostly likely identify the arrangement prior to processing.</p> <p>➤ Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> and create a new note which encompasses all actions taken on the collection and all observations about the arrangement as it is now.</p>

➤ Record all work completed in the Processing Worksheet.



## Arrangement: Item Level

Processing Level	Arrangement Actions
Level 5 Item Level	<b>Intellectual arrangement:</b> Consider whether an <u>original order</u> is detectible and identify its item order. Or, create a new item order. Series and/or subseries may be used.  <b>Physical arrangement:</b> Physical reorganization of items OK if necessary.

In level 5 processing, also called item level processing, you are concerned with the order of items within either one or two levels of hierarchy:

1. The arrangement of individual items within series and/or subseries.
2. The arrangement of individual items in the collection with no series or subseries.

The decision about whether to create series will be based on the complexity of the collection. Most small collections (less than 2 linear feet) are less likely to need series. This is because materials can easily be found by a researcher by examining the boxes or reading through a list of items in an inventory. An example of a collection which does not need a series list would be a collection made entirely of letters between two people, as the letters can simply be listed by date and they can be ordered chronologically. Larger collections and complex collections benefit from series/ subseries lists which can direct a researcher to the correct portion of the collection to examine. For example, an author's papers which include drafts, correspondence with publishing companies, biographical materials, and original memoirs could benefit from being organized into series which are named for each of those types of materials.

Here is an example of a list of items without a series hierarchy:

*Collection: Millicent Dobbs photographs*

*Item 1: Family at Treasure Lake Park, 1941*

*Item 2: Millicent Dobbs portrait card, undated*

*Item 3: Millicent Dobbs and unknown child, 1942*

*Item 4: Kansas City homestead and barn, circa 1930*

*Item 5: Sargent Frederick Dobbs, 1932*

Here is an example of an item level inventory within a series / subseries arrangement:

*Collection: Parker Family correspondence*

*Series 1: Correspondence to Hortence Parker*

*Item 1: From General Rumney, July 17, 1892*

*Item 2: From Elizabeth Parker Coles, December 12, 1893*

*Series 2: Correspondence to Mr. and Mrs. Albert Parker*

*Item 1: From Remus Parker, August 7, 1890*

*Item 2: From Albert Parker Jr., December 25, 1890*

*Item 3: From General Rumney, June 5, 1892*

*Item 4: From Arther Litton, July 18, 1895*

*Series 3: Correspondence to Remus Parker*

*Item 1: From Beatrice Langley, October 12 1888*

*Item 2: From Hortence Parker, July 22, 1895*

*Item 3: From Lillian Smith Parker, January 18, 1901*

► Conduct a folder level scan of the materials. Here are the recommended steps:

1. Examine box labels or text on the box for information about the contents, such as subjects, document types, or dates.
2. Folders containing similar items do not need to be broken down into items at this stage, because it may be quicker to arrange on the folder level. It is possible that you are working with items that have already been separated out into individual folders, but this is rare. For this reason, directions in this section will use the phrasing “folder/item” to provide for either scenario.
3. Examine the contents of the whole collection to determine whether the majority of folders/items already have labels. The information on the folder label is considered to be a **given** or **existing title**, and if the materials have not been processed at all previously, these would likely have been supplied by the creator of materials, a record keeper, or less likely, a donor. If there are none or very few given folder labels (or no folders at all) you can skip step 3 and proceed to step number 4.
4. Determine whether the given titles are accurate and useful. (They may be inaccurate for a number of reasons, for example, newer labels may have fallen off to reveal old labels, or materials may have been stuck into reused folders with unrelated titles.) Briefly review the titles and contents of a selection of folders. One folder for every 5 to 10 folders should be sufficient. The following types of titles are *not* accurate or useful:
  - a. Titles which have no relationship to the contents of the folder.
  - b. Titles which are too vague to convey folder contents.
  - c. Titles which were useful to only the creator themselves, for example **Ellie’s files**, as we do not know who Ellie is, or **personal**, which is a title that might serve an office purpose but it does not describe the contents of the material.
5. Examine folder titles or folder contents throughout the collection to gather an impression of the types, subjects, and approximate dates of materials. If titles do not exist or are inaccurate, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Keeping notes for types of material in each box may be helpful at this stage.

► Decide whether there are categories into which the folders/items should be divided. If yes, develop a list of categories to which the folders or items could belong. This is your preliminary list of series. If you think that these should be divided further, add those to the list as well as

preliminary subseries. It may take some time to understand the relationship between folders/items. If you imagine how the creator filed contents for their own personal or office needs this may help. Confer with the supervisor to develop your final series arrangement.

► Observe the order of the individual folders/items (If you have series and subseries, you are observing the order of folders or items within series/subseries groups. If there are no series or subseries you are observing the relationship of all folders/items together as a collection.)

Answer these questions:

1. Does the order appear to be the same way the creator used the files (see definition of original order)? Some creators order their files with a mixture of alphabetical and chronological order within topical or subject groups. Other creators have created file orders which may only make sense to them.
2. Does the order of the series and their folders/ items have any meaning or logic?
3. Would researchers be able to make sense of the current series and folder/item order? Could they ascertain where in the collection to look for their item(s) of interest?

If adjacent folders/items are related you may decide to keep that order as the basis for the arrangement. If the folders/items appear to be haphazard and unrelated, you may decide to impose a new order on the folders. An imposed order is often either alphabetical by folder title or chronological by date of creation.

► Review your findings with the supervisor. Discuss your plan of whether to keep the current order or to impose a new order on the materials.

► Decide to what extent you will physically rearrange the folders/items. For most item level processing jobs, even when processors keep the current arrangement, there will be materials that are out of that apparent order. Unless the physical arrangement of the folders/items matches exactly with your plan, you will need to decide whether to rearrange the physical items or just note their locations in a later inventory.

► Commence arrangement work agreed upon, if any.

Arrangement work for item level processing may entail physically or electronically moving folders/items so that they appear in the right place within the original order, appear correctly in a newly imposed order, or are unified with other folders/items in the same series and, optionally, are ordered in relation to the other folder/items in that same series.

If you have series, it can be helpful to use place-holders to temporarily signify the series while folders/items are being moved around. When you are finished moving materials, make notes on which box numbers contain which series.

**Hint:** Item level processing often involves refoldering and relabeling these materials. Sometimes it can be easier to create a final physical rearrangement of materials once refoldering and relabeling are done in sections 5.D. and 5.E.

- Create or update the arrangement note:

Element	Information and Action
Arrangement Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>This note is used to communicate the arrangement work done on a collection.</p> <p>► Consult previous documentation to see whether an arrangement note was created during the survey. The previous note will mostly likely identify the arrangement prior to processing.</p> <p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> and create a new note which encompasses all actions taken on the collection and all observations about the arrangement as it is now.</p>

- Record all work completed in the Processing Worksheet.

## 5.D. Preservation and Physical Processing

### Preservation

Preservation in the context of processing archival collections refers to actions taken to reduce further risk to material once it is in our custody. Acidic paper, rusty binders, and deteriorating film all pose varying levels of risk. Note that conservation actions, which are designed to improve the current state of material, is rarely done in archives except in very special cases.

Classic preservation actions for processing often entail:

- Rehousing materials into acid-free boxes, folders, or enclosures of proper size.
- Removal and/or photocopying of items that pose a threat to other materials.
- Removal of metal fasteners and rubber bands which damage materials.
- Unfolding and unrolling paper.

With the onset of MPLP practices, the profession began to question whether with the amount of materials in our backlogs waiting for attention it is wise to spend copious hours on preservation tasks. It is for this reason that preservation work will be defined by the processing level, and can greatly vary between collections.

- Review Appendix section A.3. Common Preservation Concerns.
- Proceed to your processing level in the chart below and evaluate your collection accordingly. Create a brief plan of action.
- Share your plan with the supervisor to get permission to proceed.
- Read Introduction section I.F. Handling and Care Guidelines for Processing Staff. If you have not already, you may receive special training for the preservation jobs you will do.
- You may require a fair number of supplies and tools for the job. Make a list with the supervisor. Your list might include:
  - Boxes of various sizes
  - Folders of various sizes
  - Special photo or negative enclosures
  - Plastiklips (to replace rusty paper clips)
  - Special enclosures for photographs, film, ephemera
  - Microspatula and a piece of mylar (for staple removal)
  - Cardboard box spacers
  - Gloves (for working with photos or metals)
  - Weights
- Directions for rehousing and removing metal fasteners will be provided to the processor as a training. Preservation work directions for various issues and formats can be found in the department's Preservation Manual. Additional directions for high level preservation work can be found in an online guide from NEDCC called [Caring for Paper Collections](#).
- Record all preservation work in the Processing Worksheet.

Processing Level	Preservation Actions
Level 2 Box Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review collection for immediate preservation threats: insects, mold, fragile materials.</li> <li>• Rehouse only if housing is unstable.</li> <li>• Refolder only if severe condition issues are present or if labels are no longer useable. Folder loose materials.</li> <li>• Remove rubber bands if easily accessible.</li> </ul>
Level 3 Series Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review collection for immediate preservation threats: insects, mold, fragile materials.</li> <li>• Rehouse in acid-free boxes.</li> <li>• Refolder if condition issues are present or if labels are no longer useable. Folder loose materials.</li> <li>• Remove rubber bands and rusty clips, staples, or binders.</li> </ul>
Level 4 Folder Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehouse in acid-free boxes and folders.</li> <li>• Maintain multiple items per folder. Retain original folder contents or folder based on document type if loose.</li> <li>• Selective preservation for damaged items.</li> <li>• Remove rubber bands; rusty clips, staples, and binders. May unfold and unroll paper.</li> </ul>
Level 5 Item Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehouse and refolder in acid-free boxes and folders.</li> <li>• Ideally, house 1 item per folder.</li> <li>• Address all preservation needs, remove all staples and hardware, unfold and unroll paper.</li> </ul>

The University of California has the following tips to increase the efficiency of preservation work:

- Avoid unfolding, flattening, or unrolling items.
- Unless the value of the collection or a particular item warrants item-level treatment, leave the item as it is found.
- Limit the amount of refolding.
- Do not replace folders that are in good, serviceable condition. Only replace folders in poor condition, or when necessary to support expected levels of use. Folders should adequately hold and protect materials as they are taken in and out of a box. If necessary, staple original adhesive file labels to folders to prevent loss of information.

- Deal efficiently with fasteners and wrappers.
- Do not routinely remove metal fasteners (staples, paper clips, or binder clips) from materials. Leave them in place unless they are already very rusty. Bundles fastened with rubber bands or other problematic wrappers should be rehoused in the most time-efficient way possible. Use an archival envelope or a folded 11 x 17 sheet of paper to maintain arrangement within the folder.

## Physical Processing

Depending on the level of processing chosen, you will spend either very little or extensive time physically readying materials for research. The preservation steps above cover a significant portion of this physical processing but, in addition, you will need to ensure that materials are otherwise ready for research use.

► For all levels of processing, complete the following tasks:

- Physical boxes need to be labeled appropriately. See Chapter 6 section 6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders for directions on labeling boxes.
- Materials should be placed in the box so that one item may be taken out at a time. It is ideal for materials such as folders, binders, and publications to be placed vertically in their boxes so that researchers do not need to pile up materials on the desk in order to get to what is beneath.
- Loose papers are placed in folders so that they can be handled properly by researchers.
- Where necessary, staple original adhesive file labels to folders to prevent loss of information.

For levels 3-5 of processing, you will need to devise a plan for how much additional labor to put into the physical processing of individual folders.

► Devise a physical processing plan and meet with the supervisor to confirm steps which will be taken. These steps may include:

- Physically moving folders so that the folders match the inventory (obviously, series are not physically apparent in collections, but the physical folder order will match the order of folders which appear in the inventory).
- Labeling or relabeling folders to match their titles. Remember: depending on the level of processing, you may be either keeping titles that currently exist or devising new titles. Refer to the Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix description section if you need to clarify what kind of title work is required. See Chapter 6 section 6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders for directions on labeling folders. Note that the Chapter 6 directions are thorough, and are best applied to processing levels 4 and 5. You may abbreviate information on the folders, but elaborate or spell it out in the online finding aid if more complete information enables discovery.

- Labeling folders to include dates. While some folders arrive at the archive with date information, most do not. Refer to the to Chapter 1. Levels of Processing Matrix: description section if you need to clarify what kind of date work is required. See Chapter 6 section 6.C. Dates for instructions for creating dates. See Chapter 6 section 6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders for directions on labeling folders. Note that the Chapter 6 directions are thorough, and are best applied to processing levels 4 and 5.
- Numbering the folders in each box to assist with refiling of materials when they are used. This is best applied to processing levels 4 and 5. It is best not to use a consecutive sequence throughout a collection, rather, start over with #1 in each box. (Sometimes folder numbers are added to the inventory or finding aid, but this step is often skipped in MPLP practice.)

► Consider whether the following note is required:

Element	Information and Action
<p>Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements Note</p> <p><i>Locally required only if relevant to the collection or addendum</i></p>	<p>This note should only be used if the physical condition of a collection would cause harm to the material <i>or</i> if special technology or verifications are needed to view electronic material. If physical processing steps address all the issues, there is no need for this note.</p> <p>► Observe the condition of the collection. Can the physical collection, in its current condition, withstand research use? Can the electronic materials be accessed through the open web and without special equipment, software, logins etc.?</p> <p>► If there are special physical or technical requirements, use Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> to develop this note.</p>

► Record all physical processing actions taken on the Processing Worksheet.



## 5.E. Basic Information

This step in processing is for recording basic descriptive information about the collection. The table for each of the following six descriptive elements includes the element name and requirement status, plus brief directions on how to fill in this information in the Processing Worksheet. All of these elements are required for all levels of Full Level Processing.

Element	Information and Action
Title <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>The collection title is almost always assigned during the acquisition process.</p> <p>➤ Acquire the title from previous documentation or from supervisor.</p> <p>If needed, additional information on titling can be found in Chapter 6 section <u>6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item)</u>.</p>
Identifier <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>This is the collection number, typically assigned during the acquisition process. All identifiers begin with MWaIB.</p> <p>➤ Acquire the ID number from previous documentation or from supervisor. Directions for creating the identifier can also be found in the Accessioning chapter.</p>
Level of Description <i>ArchivesSpace required field</i>	<p>➤ Always answer <b>collection</b> (this means the finding aid is beginning at the collection level, and not a lower one.)</p>
Resource Type <i>ArchivesSpace required field</i>	<p>Choose one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Collection:</b> use this for collections that are intentionally assembled and were not the original creations of the collector.</li><li>• <b>Records:</b> use this for collections that were created by an organization, institution or corporate body (rather than a person).</li></ul>

Element	Information and Action
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Papers:</b> use this for collections that were created by an individual or family.</li> <li>• <b>Publications</b></li> </ul>
Language <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>► Select the predominant language of the materials being described. If there are other languages present and you know what they are, list those as well. If you are not sure, please ask a supervisor.</p>
Classification <i>Locally Required</i>	<p>Classification refers to the larger grouping of materials within the organization.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Special Collections materials are classified as “Special Collections.”</li> <li>• University Archives materials will be one of the following: Alumni Collections, Conferring Functions, Cultural Activities, Faculty Collections, PublicOutreach, Research Functions, Sound and Moving Images, Student Activities, Subject Collections, Sustaining Functions, or Teaching Functions.</li> </ul> <p>If you are not sure which category the collection falls under, ask your supervisor.</p>

## 5.F. Description: Narrative Descriptive Notes

Collection narration is one of two types of description created during processing, and is designed to complement the final inventory. Unlike other sections of the Full Processing chapter, Collection Narration does not dramatically differ depending on processing level. This is because narration is always necessary to ensure that users of the material understand the context, history, and availability of material.

► For all levels of processing, create the following two notes for the collection:

- Scope and Content note
- Custodial History note

Element	Information and Action
Scope and Content Note <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>This narrative field is a summary description of the collection as a whole. The purpose is to provide the context of the materials in the collection. This note should either be created or updated at this stage.</p> <p>► Search for an existing Scope and Content note in the collection documentation or in a published finding aid if there is one.</p> <p>► Examine any existing note in light of new information which you gain throughout Full Level Processing. Note that if you are processing an addendum to an existing collection, you need to update the existing note based on your knowledge of the addendum.</p> <p>► Create or update the note in the Processing Worksheet. For full directions on writing this note, see Chapter 6 section <a href="#">6.E. Finding Aid Notes</a>.</p>
Custodial History Note <i>Locally Required</i>	<p>All collections have a custodial history. This note contains the public version of what in archives we call <u>provenance</u>, as well as any</p>

Element	Information and Action
	<p>timelines of ownership or custody of the collection.</p> <p>► Please refer to Chapter 1 section <u>I.D. Prioritizing Social Justice and Working Toward a Reparative Archive</u> for a full description of our working definition of provenance, and the ways in which it relates to anti-oppressive archival practice.</p> <p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> to determine the information you need to cover as well as how to write this note.</p>

The University of California has the following tip to increase the efficiency with notes:

*Use scope and content notes strategically. A good scope and content note for a series, subseries, or large chunk of files may make arrangement and description at the folder level unnecessary. It is often less time consuming to summarize contents in a note, rather than organizing or listing out individual folder titles. Use keywords to improve identification of material for online searching.*

► Record each note in the Processing Worksheet under the Collection Description tab.

## 5.G. Description: Inventory

An inventory is one of two main areas of collection description created during processing. This section details how to create an inventory which suits the level of processing you are operating in. Final published inventories prevent the need for researchers or archivists to physically review an entire collection to find what they need. In some cases, a collection or addendum may arrive at the archive with an inventory, or a quick inventory might be made of small collections when they arrive. Most often however, processors will be making a final inventory for publishing in a finding aid.

► Create a list of materials at the chosen level of processing. For example, if you are doing box level processing, you will be creating a list of boxes with summary information about their contents. If you are doing item level processing, you will be making a list of every item in that collection. Most collection inventories fall somewhere in between these two. If you have not been given other instructions, your inventory should be created in the Processing Worksheet tab called **Collection Inventory**.

## Description: Inventory: Box Level

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Description Actions: Inventory
2	Box	<p>Box-level descriptions for finding aid in ArchivesSpace or spreadsheet: <i>(Box-level description is defined as a high-level listing of the contents of each box, ideally summarized).</i></p> <p>Retain existing folder titles.</p> <p>Express box dates in decades.</p>

Create a box level inventory by briefly reviewing the contents of each box. You will be observing any existing folder titles and dates and creating brief descriptive information for that box.

► If you have not yet done so for the Arrangement section of this chapter, do a box scan for every box in the collection. Here are tips on doing an effective but efficient box scan:

1. Examine folder titles, where available, without removing them from the box. If titles are not available, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Note that during box level processing, you will not be checking the accuracy of the folder titles or providing new folder titles.
2. Gather an impression of the types and subjects of materials contained in that box. Keeping notes with box numbers and types of contents will be helpful at this stage.
3. Look for dates on folders, or, sample every 5-10 folders and review the contents for creation dates. However, do resist examining every folder or every document, and do not reconstruct dates from the context, rather, rely on actual dates listed on the documents. Processing at the box level only asks that you assign the decades which are covered in the box, and if there is uncertainty around the dates, you may refer to Chapter 6 section 6.C. Dates for help. The term **circa**, for example, can be added to imply an approximate time period.

► Create an inventory of box titles/ descriptions.

1. Inquire with the supervisor about where your inventory should be created. Options are listed In Chapter 6 section 6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information.
2. Refer to the examples below.
3. Utilize the directions for creating your Box Title/Descriptions in Chapter 6 section 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item).

Here is an example of a box inventory which is typical of organizational/ institutional records:

*Department of Communications records*

*Box 1: Correspondence and event photographs, 1950s to 1970s*

*Box 2: Publicity files, circa 1960s*

*Box 3: Publicity files, circa 1980s*

*Box 4: Publicity files, 1980s-1990s*

*Box 5: Administrative meeting minutes, late 1940s - early 1950s*

*Box 6: Administrative meeting minutes and personnel files, mid 1950s*

Here is a box inventory which is more typical of personal papers:

*Henrietta J. Fox papers*

*Box 1: Diaries and memorabilia, 1890s-1910s*

*Box 2: Photographs and drawings, undated*

*Box 3: Law school notes and letters, 1920s*

*Box 4: Photographs and family correspondence, 1890s-1920s*

*Box 5: Photographs and family correspondence, 1890s-1940s*

Sometimes the box contents are not so easily and neatly summarized, in which case you may end up with a more complex list. For example, if one box covers several subjects and document types you may end up with something like this:

*Box 1: Correspondence and event photographs, 1950s to 1970s; Publicity files, 1960s, 1980s; Administrative meeting minutes and personnel files, early 1950s*

*Box 2: Publicity files, 1980s-1990s; Administrative meeting minutes, 1950s*

*Box 3: Subject files, 1980s-1990s; untitled manuscript, undated; Event photographs, 1970s; Publications, 1970s*

- Review the box inventory with the supervisor and make any recommended changes.
- Once your box inventory is complete, document all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet, including the location of the inventory.

## Description: Inventory: Series Level

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Description Actions: Inventory
3	Series	Series/subseries level finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> or spreadsheet.  Retain existing folder titles.  Express dates either in decades, or as exact years.

For series level processing, an inventory will be created which lists the thematic groupings of the materials. See Introduction section I.C. Definitions and Basic Archival Concepts.

► If you have not already done so for the Arrangement section of this chapter, briefly review the contents of each box. You will be observing any existing folder titles and dates and creating categories, or series, for the folders to belong to. Here are tips on doing an effective but efficient scan of the collection materials:

1. Examine folder titles, where available, without removing them from their boxes. If titles are not available, randomly sample every 5-10 folders and review its contents. However, do resist examining every folder or every document. Note that during series level processing, you will not be checking the accuracy of the folder titles or providing new folder titles.
2. Gather an impression of the types and subjects of materials. Keeping notes for types of material in each box may be helpful at this stage.
3. Look for dates on folders, or, sample every 5-10 folders and review those for creation dates. However, do resist examining every folder or every document, and do not reconstruct dates from the context, rather, rely on actual dates listed on the documents. Processing at the box level only asks that you assign the decades which are covered in the box, and if there is uncertainty around the dates, you may refer to Chapter 6 section 6.C. Dates for help. The term **circa**, for example, can be added to imply an approximate time period.
4. Remember that series are not limited by box. You may have several series for a single box, have a series split between two boxes, or have one series which spans several boxes.
5. It may take some time to understand the relationship between folders. If you imagine how the creator filed contents for their own personal or office needs this may help.

► Create an inventory of series titles, and subseries if needed. If you have already created a preliminary series/ subseries list during the Arrangement section of this chapter, now is the opportunity to fine tune the wording of your series titles.

1. Inquire with the supervisor about where your inventory should be created. Options are listed in Chapter 6 section 6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information.
2. Refer to the examples below.
3. Utilize the directions for creating your Series Titles in Chapter 6 section 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item).

Here is an example of a series inventory in a family papers collection:

*Collection name: The DeLaria Family papers*  
*Series 1: Diaries and ephemera, 1900s to 1910s*  
*Series 2: School records, 1920s, 1940s*  
*Series 3: Family correspondence, 1890s-1940s*  
*Series 4: Drawings by Francis DeLaria, undated*

Here is an example of a series inventory in which two different series are broken out into subseries:

*Collection name: Department of Communications records*  
*Series 1: Administrative meeting minutes, 1949-1954*  
*Series 2: Correspondence*  
     *Subseries 1: Individuals, 1950s to 1960s*  
     *Subseries 2: Institutions, 1960s*  
*Series 3: Event photographs, 1970s- 1980s*  
     *Subseries 1: Anniversaries, 1970s*  
     *Subseries 2: Fundraisers, 1980s*  
     *Subseries 3: Holiday parties, 1970s-1980s*  
*Series 4: Personnel files, circa 1970s*  
*Series 5: Publicity files, 1960s, 1980s-1990s*

- Review the series inventory with the supervisor and make any recommended changes.
- Once your series inventory is complete, document all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet, including the location of the inventory.



## Description: Inventory: Folder Level

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Description Actions: Inventory
4	Folder	<p>Series/subseries level finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> or spreadsheet with folder lists.  <i>(Combination of series and folder level description is OK)</i></p> <p>Standardize and improve existing folder titles.</p> <p>Express dates as exact years.</p>

A folder level inventory can be created with one of two types of structure:

1. Folders are listed without any other levels of hierarchy.
2. Folders are listed within a structure of series and perhaps subseries.

Here is an example of a folder level inventory without a hierarchy structure:

*Collection name: Robert Smith letters*

*Folder 1: Moody, Daisy, 1918-1934*

*Folder 2: Smith, Johnny, 1920-1922*

*Folder 3: Smith, Wyatt, 1918-1922*

*Folder 4: Smith, Michael, 1890-1942*

*Folder 5: Xavier, Robert, 1920*

Here is an example of a folder inventory within a series / subseries structure:

*Collection name: Department of Communications records*

*Series 1: Administrative meeting minutes*

*Folder: Minutes, 1949-1951*

*Folder: Minutes and notes, 1952-1954*

*Series 2: Correspondence*

*Subseries 1: Individuals*

*Folder: Cooper, Beth, 1952-1956*

*Folder: White, Ian, 1955*

*Folder: McGuinness, Mary, 1961*

*Folder: Locke, Albert, 1967-1969*

*Subseries 2: Institutions*

*Folder: University of Albany, 1958*

*Folder: University of Kentucky, 1958-1959*

*Folder: Church of the Holy Sepulchre, 1966*  
*Series 3: Event photographs, 1970s*  
*Folder: Founders Day, 1971-1978*  
*Folder: 25th Anniversary, 1974*  
*Folder: Homecoming, 1978*

- In the Arrangement section of this chapter you will have determined whether you will be creating a simple folder list, or a folder list within a list of series/subseries. If you are creating a folder list within a series, you will need to create an inventory of series first. For those directions please see the Description: Inventory: Series Level section of this chapter. Once you have your final list of series and any subseries you may return to this section.
- Create a folder level inventory. Here are the recommended steps, some of which you may have done already for the Arrangement section of this Chapter:
  1. Examine the contents of the whole collection to determine whether the majority of folders already have labels. The information on this label is considered to be a **given or existing title**, and if the materials have not been processed at all previously, these would likely have been supplied by the creator of materials, a record keeper, or perhaps a donor. If there are very few given folder labels proceed to step number 4.
  2. Determine whether the given titles are accurate and useful. They may be inaccurate for a number of reasons, for example, newer labels may have fallen off to reveal old labels, or materials may have been stuck into re-used folders when they were donated. Briefly review the titles and contents of a selection of folders. One folder for every 5 to 10 folders should be sufficient. The following types of titles are not accurate or useful:
    - a. Titles which have no relationship to the contents of the folder.
    - b. Titles which are too vague to convey folder contents.
    - c. Titles which were useful to only the creator themselves, for example **Ellie's files**, as we do not know who Ellie is or **personal**, which would serve an office purpose but it does not describe the contents of the folder.
  3. Discuss your findings with the supervisor. You will need to decide on the following together:
    - a. Will given or existing folder labels/titles be kept and transcribed into the inventory as final folder titles?
    - b. Will unclear or incorrect titles be modified or expanded or annotated?
  4. Folders without given or useful titles will be titled by the processor. Utilize the directions in Chapter 6 section 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item).
  5. Type up the list of given or newly created titles. If you have series and subseries, be sure to list the folders under them hierarchically, like in the examples above. Inquire with the supervisor as to where your inventory should be created, as there are several options, listed in Chapter 6 section 6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information.
  6. The Preservation section of this chapter includes making the decision of whether or not materials will be refoldered, and if yes, you may want to combine that task with typing up

the folder list. (In fact, some processors prefer to refolder while creating new titles, followed by typing the inventory. Feel free to discuss this option with the supervisor.)

7. Scan items for dates or date ranges and create a date or date range for each folder. Folder level processing requires you to record the date or date range in year format. Refer to the directions on creating dates, located in Chapter 6 section 6.C. Dates.

► Review the folder inventory with the supervisor and make any recommended changes.

► Once your folder inventory is complete, document all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet, including the location of the inventory. Also document whether your practice has been to keep given titles, create new titles, or a combination of both.

## Description: Inventory: Item Level

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Description Actions: Inventory
5	Item	Standardize and improve new folder titles.  Full finding aid in <u>ArchivesSpace</u> with item lists.  Express dates in exact years or as mm/dd/yyyy.

An item level inventory can be created in one of two types of structure:

1. Items are listed without any other levels of hierarchy.
2. Items are listed within a structure of series and perhaps subseries.

Here is an example of an item level inventory without a hierarchy structure:

*Collection: Millicent Dobbs photographs*

*Item 1: Family at Treasure Lake Park, 1941*

*Item 2: Millicent Dobbs portrait card, undated*

*Item 3: Millicent Dobbs and unknown child, 1942*

*Item 4: Kansas City homestead and barn, circa 1930*

*Item 5: Sargent Frederick Dobbs, 1932*

Here is an example of an item level inventory within a series / subseries structure. Notice that the “Correspondence” series also has three subseries:

*Collection: Department of Communications records*

*Series 1: Administrative meeting minutes*

- Item 1: Minutes August 1948- July 1949*
- Item 2: Minutes August 1949- July 1950*
- Item 3: Minutes August 1950- July 1951*
- Item 4: Minutes and notes August 1951- July 1952*
- Item 5: Minutes and notes August 1952-July 1953*
- Item 6: Minutes and notes August 1963- July 1954*

**Series 2: Correspondence**

**Subseries 1: Cooper, Beth**

- Item 1: Statement of interest and CV, 1952*
- Item 2: Inter-departmental memo, 1953*
- Item 3: Invitation to Colloquium, 1954*
- Item 4: Resignation, 1956*

**Subseries 2: White, Ian**

- Item 1: Letter of appreciation, 1955*
- Item 2: TLS to President Aaron Wright, 1955*

**Subseries 3: Locke, Albert**

- Item 1: Letter to George Alpert, 1967*
- Item 2: Letter to Amos Wright, 1967*
- Item 3: Letter to Agatha Whent, 1969*

► In the Arrangement section of this chapter you will have determined whether you will be creating a simple item list, or an item list within a list of series/subseries. If you are creating an item list within a series, you will need to create an inventory of series first. For those directions please see the Description: Inventory: Series Level section of this chapter. Once you have your final list of series and any subseries you may return to this section.

► Create an item level inventory. Here are the recommended steps, some of which you may have done already for the Arrangement section of this chapter:

1. Collections will most likely arrive with multiple items in folders, although it is possible that you have received items already separated out into their own labeled folders. Either way, it is best to keep items inside existing folders with the available identifying information until later in the process.
2. Examine the contents of the whole collection to determine whether the majority of items already have labels on their folders. The information on this label is considered to be a **given or existing title**, and if the materials have not been processed at all previously, these would likely have been supplied by the creator of materials, a record keeper, or perhaps a donor. If there are very few given folder labels proceed to step number 5.
3. Determine whether the given titles are accurate and useful. They may be inaccurate for a number of reasons, for example, newer labels may have fallen off to reveal old labels, or materials may have been stuck into re-used folders when they were donated. Briefly review the titles and contents of a selection of folders. One folder for every 5 to 10 folders should be sufficient. The following types of titles are not accurate or useful:
  - a. Titles which have no relationship to the contents of the folder.

- b. Titles which are too vague to convey folder contents.
  - c. Titles which were useful to only the creator themselves, for example **Ellie's files**, as we do not know who Ellie is, or **personal**, which would serve an office purpose but it does not describe the contents of the folder.
- 4. Discuss your findings with the supervisor. You will need to decide whether given or existing folder labels will be useful to assist you in processing work and later, can be used as the basis for item titles useful to the researcher.
- 5. Items without given or useful titles on their folders will be titled by the processor. Utilize the directions in Chapter 6 section 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item).
- 6. Items which shared a folder and had a useful title can be treated in one of three ways:
  - a. The title of the original folder will be applied to each item, resulting in duplication of titles.
  - b. The title of the original folder will be amended to add more specificity to describe each item.
  - c. The title of the original folder will help the processor to understand the contents, but entirely new and unique item titles will be created by the processor.
- 7. Type up the list of given or newly created item titles. If you have series and subseries, be sure to list the items under them hierarchically, like in the examples. Inquire with the supervisor as to where your list should be created, as there are several options, listed in Chapter 6 section 6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information.
- 8. The Preservation section of this chapter includes making the decision of whether or not materials will be refoldered, and if yes, you may want to combine that task with typing up the folder list. (In fact, some processors prefer to re-folder while creating new titles, followed by typing the inventory. Feel free to discuss this option with the supervisor.)
- 9. Scan individual items for a date. During item level processing you have a choice between recording just the year, or recording an exact date which includes day, month, and year. Items that do not have a date on the document itself, or a reliable folder date, or electronic creation date should be marked **undated**. Refer to the directions on creating dates located in Chapter 6 section 6.C. Dates.

►Review the item inventory with the supervisor and make any recommended changes.

►Once your item inventory is complete, document all actions taken in the Processing Worksheet, including the location of the inventory. Also document whether your practice has been to keep given titles, create new titles, or a combination of both.

## 5.H. Dates and Extents

Once you have accomplished most of the processing work you are ready to declare dates and extents for the whole collection. Depending on your level of processing, you may have already created dates at the box, series, folder, or item level. You will use this information to help create an inclusive date. You may also create a bulk date if you need to emphasize the fact that the majority of the materials fall in a much narrower date range than the collection as a whole. An inclusive date range is required for all levels of processing, however bulk dates should not be created unless you have a lot of detailed date information gathered and can easily do so. Extent is used to record information about the size of the collection.

► Create your dates and extents for the collection as a whole and record these in the Processing Worksheet using the following directions:

Element	Information and Action
Dates <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>One or two date statements are to be created at this stage:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Inclusive date for the whole collection.</li><li>2. Bulk date for the whole collection (if applicable).</li></ol> <p>► Create a date range for the collection by following the instructions in Chapter 6 section <u>6.C. Dates</u>. There are various other levels of dates that will likely be created for Full Level Processing during later stages. Depending on the level of processing, you will create date ranges for all levels of hierarchy. For example, if you are doing box or series level processing, you will also create dates for those levels, resulting in a date range for each box or each series. Additionally, if you are doing folder or item level processing you will create a date range or exact date for each of those items. It is therefore possible, if you have an extensive hierarchy, that you will have dates that refer, for example, to the collection as a whole, each of its series, and each folder.</p>

Element	Information and Action
<p>Extent <i>DACS Required Element</i></p>	<p>The extent of a collection refers to the amount or size of material in a collection. It allows researchers to make judgments about the amount of information they will have to consult during their research. According to Brandeis local practices, extent is expressed through a statement about the size of the collection in linear feet and a box count that includes the types of container present.</p> <p>► For physical boxes assess and record the number of linear feet for the collection. When calculating linear feet, keep the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 brown box (record center box) = 1 linear foot</li> <li>• 1 grey box (Hollinger/manuscript box) = .5 linear feet.</li> </ul> <p>For more extensive information on determining linear feet see Appendix section <u>A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage</u>.</p> <p>► For electronic collections report the extent in bytes (megabytes, gigabytes, etc.).</p> <p>► For hybrid collections create two extent statements, one for physical and one for electronic. If the size of the electronic is not known, use <b>unknown</b> to note the presence of such material.</p> <p>► Assess and record the number of containers in the collection by type of container.</p> <p><i>Example: 4 manuscript boxes, 2 oversized folders, 1 clamshell box</i></p>

## 5.1. Agents and Subjects

Agent records contain the standardized form of a personal, organizational, or institutional name. Subject records contain the standardized form of topics in a collection. They are both created by consulting resources which document standardized cataloging conventions.

Element	Information and Action
Agent: Creator or Collector <i>DACS Required Element</i>	<p>Please check with the supervisor as to whether they want you to create agents. In most cases, agents will be created by cataloging librarians after the finding aid has been published.</p> <p>For more information about creating agents, please see Appendix section <a href="#">A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings</a>.</p>
Subjects <i>DACS Single Level Optimum Element</i>	<p>Please check with the supervisor as to whether they want you to create subjects. In most cases, agents will be created by cataloging librarians after the finding aid has been published.</p> <p>For more information about creating agents, please see Appendix section <a href="#">A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings</a>.</p>



## 5.J. Access Determination and Notes

Archives do not provide access to all the materials it owns at all times. While access is the goal, some materials have restrictions for legal or privacy reasons. Reviewing materials for possible restrictions is often a part of processing, and is conducted to a different degree depending on the level of processing. Here are the levels as found in the Processing Level Matrix:

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Restrictions & Privacy Actions
2	Box	Conduct brief review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Restrict by the box.</li><li>2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review on-demand.</li></ol>
3	Series/Subseries	Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Restrict by the series or subseries.</li><li>2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review on-demand.</li></ol>
4	Folder	Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues  <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Restrict by the folder.</li><li>2. Separate or denote restricted folders to assist reference where possible.</li></ol>

Level of Processing	Level of Control	Restrictions & Privacy Actions
5	Item	<p>Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Restrict by the item.</li> <li>2. Separate or denote restricted items to assist reference.</li> </ol>

► If you are directed to do restrictions work during processing proceed to Chapter 9 and conduct either a moderate or maximum restrictions review, depending on your level of processing. You may want to inquire with the supervisor if you come across any notes about restricted or sensitive material from donors, accessioners, or previous processors.

► If you have done a restrictions review note the details of the review in the Processing Worksheet.

► Two notes are to be created at this stage:

Element	Information and Action
Conditions Governing Access Note <i>DACS required element</i>	<p>An Access note should be recorded at this stage, indicating the status of restrictions in a collection. (While preservation status is also an access issue, the work and note about it is in a previous section).</p> <p>► Proceed to Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> to compose a Conditions Governing Access note based on your work on the collection. If you have not been directed to do a restrictions review, please inquire with the supervisor as to which note to use.</p>
Conditions Governing Use Note <i>Locally required</i>	<p>The status of the copyright for each collection is complicated and processors are not required to research this, so we have a</p>

Element	Information and Action
	<p>standard statement for this note used for all collections.</p> <p>► Enter: <b>Requests to reproduce or publish material from the collection should be directed to the Robert D. Farber University Archives &amp; Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.</b></p>

- Record the above notes in the Processing Worksheet in the Collection Description tab.

## 5.K. Processing Information Note

After processing is complete it is essential that the processor create a final note which will be used to explain all work done on the collection by the processor. This helps researchers and archivists understand the context of the collection better, and to help plan any future work on the collection.

- Review the steps taken on the collection by reviewing notes you took in the Processing Worksheet. Compile this information in order to create the Processing Information Note.

Element	Information and Action
<p>Processing Information Note</p> <p><i>Locally required</i></p>	<p>A Processing Information note allows you to record the processing history of a collection, as well as to highlight the processing actions you have performed. The actions include: reconstruction of <u>provenance</u>, reconstruction / maintenance / alteration of <u>original order</u>, devising titles, or weeding. This is especially important for transparency and patron education.</p> <p>► Follow the directions in Chapter 6 section <u>6.E. Finding Aid Notes</u> for providing accurate statements which describe actions you are taking on the collection.</p>

## 5.L. Creating a Finding Aid in ArchivesSpace

As a processor you may be directed to create, or assist in creating, a public finding aid using the tool [ArchivesSpace](#).

► Proceed to [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#) of this manual if you are asked to input the information directly into the [ArchivesSpace](#) system. Most of the fields you will be directed to create will be copied from the work you have already completed in the Processing Worksheet.

► Finding aid data should be created before publishing:

Element	Information and Action
Finding Aid Data <i>Locally Required: EAD ID, Finding Aid Title, Finding Aid Date, Finding Aid Author, Language of Description</i>	<p>The following fields are used in order to create a good standard EAD document (EAD, Encoded Archival Description, is the xml standard underlying archival finding aids). They are administrative fields which speak to how and when a finding aid has been created.</p> <p>► <b>EAD ID:</b> Enter the Collection Identifier number. <i>Example: MWAIB02727.</i></p> <p>► <b>Finding Aid Title:</b> Enter the title of the collection. <i>Example: Nahum Goldmann papers.</i></p> <p>► <b>Finding Aid Date:</b> Enter the date the finding aid was completed. Follow rules for formulating dates in <a href="#">DACS 2.4</a>.</p> <p>► <b>Finding Aid Author:</b> Enter the names of the individual(s) who created the finding aid. You can use the Processing Note to acknowledge other contributions and contributors.</p> <p>► <b>Language of Description:</b> Enter <b>English</b>.</p> <p>► <b>Description Rules:</b> Select <b>Describing Archives: A Content Standard</b>.</p>

### **Publishing the Finding Aid:**

Processors should be saving their progress often in [ArchivesSpace](#), but will not publish the finding aid until it has been reviewed by the supervisor. Once a finding aid has been officially approved, it is published by the collections manager by clicking **Publish All** at the collection level record.

### **Updating Processing Status:**

At this stage the Collections Master List for the unit should be updated by the supervisor to reflect the status of processing steps and the finding aid.

## **5.M. Creating a Collection-Level Catalog Record**

Cataloguers in the CATSS Department are responsible for creating or updating the catalog record in [Onesearch](#). As a part of this process they can create an authority record for the creator(s) and subject terms based on your Scope and Content note and their own research. Currently, when the resource record has been completed and is published in [ArchivesSpace](#), the link to the public finding aid is sent to a member of CATSS. This will be their cue to create or update a catalog record.

## **5.N. Completing Full Level Processing**

After the catalog record has been completed, the cataloger or supervisor should create the Authority records and Subject headings in the finding aid. Refer to the catalog record which has been created and follow directions in [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#) on how to add them to [ArchivesSpace](#).

► Check the full level section of the Processing Worksheet to ensure that all appropriate steps have been carried out.

Once the worksheet is complete, the supervisor will make the final determination as to whether the collection can be made available to researchers and may at that time upload and/or publish the finding aid.

► At this stage the Collections Master List for the unit should again be updated by the supervisor to reflect the status of the processing steps, finding aid, and catalog record.

# Chapter 6. Writing Archival Description

This chapter covers description work in great detail, and is a reference point for the description work that is part of the workflows in other chapters. This chapter is also meant to be system agnostic, meaning that these guidelines can be followed while filling out descriptive information such as titles, dates, etc. in the Processing Worksheet, an upload spreadsheet, or directly in [ArchivesSpace](#) (for information on how to enter descriptive information into ArchivesSpace see [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#)).

## 6.A. Options for Recording Descriptive Information

As a processor working through this manual, you will begin by collecting descriptive information in the Processing Worksheet. While some projects end with filling out this Worksheet, others will utilize additional tools in order to bring this information to the public. All finding aids will eventually be in [ArchivesSpace](#), but not all processing projects include work in ArchivesSpace. Here are the various scenarios which the supervisor and you can choose from. If you are unsure which method to use, please consult your supervisor.

### The Processing Worksheet:

The Processing Worksheet includes all fields required for inventory description, including a space to record series, subseries, folders, and items along with their dates and container numbers.

### From Processing Worksheet to ArchivesSpace:

Inventory details may be transferred to [ArchivesSpace](#) by copying and pasting each item into ArchivesSpace. This method is preferable to gathering information while in ArchivesSpace, as it is easier to separate the intellectual work from use of the tool. Directions for entering collection description into ArchivesSpace can be found in [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#).

### From Formatted Spreadsheet to ArchivesSpace:

If the finding aid will require an inventory and the list of more than a few items, and many do, it will save time to enter inventory data into the pre-formatted spreadsheet designated for this use. The spreadsheet allows the creator to easily duplicate data, such as box numbers, and is the most efficient way to ingest long lists of series, folders, or items into an [ArchivesSpace](#) finding aid. If the chosen finding aid entry method is a pre-formatted spreadsheet, see [Chapter 7. Entering Finding Aid Data Using an Upload Spreadsheet](#). (Please note that the spreadsheet cannot be used to ingest collection level data.)

## 6.B. Titles (Collection, Box, Series, Folder, Item)

At every level of description, from the collection to the item, a title is used to convey the contents. Most titles of published material have been standardized and there is usually only one possible correct title that librarians must use. However, titles of archival materials must be ascertained through processing workflows. The challenge is to convey contents by using the right words and to make it as brief as possible. Two specific practices are discouraged, and these are the use of **Miscellaneous** as a title, or simply describing things by format, such as **Videos**, or **Floppy disks**.

Here is a list of the types of titles created in archival processing and guidelines on creating them:

### Collection Titles

Archival collections must have a title by which they can be identified. It is possible that a title may already exist for your collection, either because it has a **formal title**—a title assigned to it by the creator or publisher of the materials--or because a **devised title** was already created by the accessioning Archivist or a previous processor. A devised title is an archivist-created title, and is usually composed of two parts: the name of the person, family, or organization that created the materials, and a term which describes the type of materials present (such as **papers**, **records**, etc.). If no formal or previously devised title exists for your collection, or if the present title is inadequate (for example, it is found to not be the correct name of an organization or a person), you should assign a Collection Title in conjunction with your supervisor.

- Examine the collection documentation to assess whether a title has already been assigned to the collection, as well as the relevancy of said title.
- If the title is inaccurate, or no title exists, work with your supervisor to create one according to following guidelines outlined in Chapter 2: Accessioning.

### Box Titles and Descriptions

Box descriptions are a type of minimal description because there is just one level of hierarchy to create. Box titles/ descriptions should be created by the processor which can later be effectively browsed or keyword searched by the user.

- Create a list of box descriptions or titles using the following guidance:
  - To create a box description, you should aim to describe the contents using a short phrase or sentence fragment. Here is a common formula for creating this phrase or fragment:

- A noun that conveys the subject of the material, such as **faculty, Department of Finance, donors, students, family, etc.**
- A word which refers to the type of material, such as **correspondence, photographs, drafts, memos, reports, etc.** or a more general term such as **records**.
- [optional] A word that acts as a clarifier, such as **personal, or professional**.
- Titles using this formula and these examples could be: **Fred Smith personal photographs, Donor reports and correspondence, and Department of Finance records**.
- Depending on the scope of the material being described, you may summarize using broad phrases such as **business records**. Or, if the group of material is found to have a more specific nature, you may be able to define it narrower, as in **financial statements and reports**. A broad phrase for personal papers could be **personal correspondence**, or it may be described more specifically, as in **travel letters and postcards**.
- Another option is to name the box by a general term, such as **correspondence, business records**, or a specific phrase such as **Hingham Project** and then provide further detail in a box level Scope and Content note. This is the best option when a narration would be better suited to the contents. For example, perhaps the Hingham Project would be best suited to description that explains what that project was. In this case you can name the box simply by the project name and then include further details in the note. To create a Scope and Content note see Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes.

➤ Whether you choose to go with a broad phrase, a more specific phrase, or a broad phrase with Scope and Content note, try to keep your practice consistent throughout the collection being described.

## Series and Subseries Titles

Series and subseries titles are created by the processor so that they can be browsed by the user, or can function as keywords during searches.

➤ Create a list of series titles using the following guidance:

- Series/ subseries titles should be composed of a short phrase. Here is a common formula for creating this phrase:
  - A noun that conveys the subject of the material, such as **faculty, Department of Finance, donors, students, family, etc.**
  - A word which refers to the type of material, such as **correspondence, photographs, drafts, memos, reports, etc.** or a more general term such as **records**.



- [optional] A word that acts as a clarifier, such as **personal**, or **professional**.
- Titles using this formula and these examples could be: **Fred Smith photographs**, **Donor correspondence**, and **Department of Finance memos**.
- Depending on the scope of material being described, you may summarize using broad phrases such as **business records**. But if the group of material is found to have a more specific nature, you may be able to define it narrower, as in **financial statements and reports**. A broad phrase for personal papers could be **personal correspondence**, or it may be described more specifically, as in **travel letters and postcards**.
- If there are large groups of material (several boxes or more) which fall under a similar record type then subseries may be named. For example, a faculty papers collection with a series called **professional papers** could have subseries called **publication drafts**, **Chemistry Department correspondence and memos**, and **research note**. By breaking the series into subseries, you can provide better access to large amounts of related material.
- Another option is to name the series by a general term, such as **personal correspondence** or **professional papers** and then provide further detail in a series level Scope and Content note. This is the best option when a narration would be better suited to the contents. For example, perhaps the personal correspondence needs further explanation as to what persons are or are not included, or to explain how they are related to the main subject of the collection. To create a Scope and Content note see Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes.

► Whether you choose to go with a broad series phrase, a more specific series phrase, a broad series phrase with specific subseries, or a broad phrase with Scope and Content note, try to keep your practice consistent throughout the collection being described.

## Folder Titles

► Create descriptive and concise folder titles using the following guidance:

- Folder titles should be composed of a short phrase. Here is a common formula for creating this phrase:
  - A noun that conveys the subject of the material, such as **faculty**, **Department of Finance**, **donors**, **students**, **family**, etc.
  - A word which refers to the type of material, such as **correspondence**, **photographs**, **draft**, **memos**, **report**, etc.
  - Titles using this formula and these examples could be: **Fred Smith photographs**, **Donor correspondence**, and **Department of Finance memos**.

- If series (and maybe subseries) titles are already present, use the folder title to get more specific. For example, if you have a series titled **Brandeis 50th Anniversary** you do not need to repeat those words but can simply title the folder **Event photographs**. Other folders may be **Publicity files**, **Planning documents**, and **Media coverage**. They are all understood as being about the **Brandeis 50th Anniversary**. See the following hierarchical structure:
  - *Series: Brandeis 50th Anniversary*
    - Folder 1: Event photographs*
    - Folder 2: Publicity files*
    - Folder 3: Planning documents*
- If some given or existing titles are present on the folder labels but they are not specific enough, consider expanding the original title. For example, if a folder has arrived with a label of **1995 Report** and it is from a collection of reports from all University departments you could expand to include the subject, for example **Dean of Students annual report, 1995**.
- Sometimes several folders will require the same title. You can use the following MPLP method for this situation:
  - You can add brackets at the end of the written titles on folders to help link them together (Example folder labels can be **Event photographs [1 of 3]**, **Event photographs [2 of 3]** and so on).
  - In an inventory or finding aid, instead of repeating the title, you can enter it once followed by the number of folders (Example **Event photographs [3 folders]**).

## Item Titles

► Create descriptive and concise item titles using the following guidance:

- Some items are already titled on the document itself, for example drafts (named for the publication title and the word “draft”) reports (may have the topic or frequency of the report written on the first page) and labeled photographs. These are the easiest items to title.
- Many types of documents do not have their own titles, in which case you should create a descriptive phrase, and you can use the following formula to create that:
  - A noun that conveys the subject of the material, such as a personal or family name, **faculty**, **Department of Finance**, **Fred Smith**, **anniversary**, etc.
  - A word which refers to the type of material, such as **letter**, **photograph**, **draft**, **memo**, **report**, etc.
  - Titles using this formula and these examples could be: **Fred Smith family photograph**, **30th anniversary plan** and **Department of Finance annual report**.
- If series (and maybe subseries) titles are already present, use the item title to get more specific. For example, if you have a series titled **Fred Smith photographs**,

you do not need to repeat those words but can simply title the items **Mary Smith portrait**. Other items may be **Homestead in Greene County, Smith brothers**, and **unknown portrait**. These are all understood as being Fred Smith photographs. See the following hierarchical structure:

- *Series: Fred Smith photographs*
  - Folder 1: Mary Smith portrait*
  - Folder 2: Homestead in Greene County*
  - Folder 3: Smith brothers*
  - Folder 4: Unknown portrait*
- If some given or existing titles are present on the folder labels but they are not specific enough, consider expanding the original title. For example, if a folder with two items is labeled **Harold**, you could expand that in your item titles to be **Harold Smith letter to Mary**, and **Harold Smith untitled poem**.
- In rare cases, several items will require the same title. You can use the following MPLP method for this situation:
  - You can add brackets at the end of the written item titles on folders to help link them together (*Example: folder labels can be Unidentified photograph [1 of 3], Unidentified photograph [2 of 3], and so on*).
  - In an inventory or finding aid, instead of repeating the title, you can enter it once followed by the number of folders (*Example: Unidentified photographs [3 folders]*).

## 6.C. Dates

The most common dates recorded for archival materials are creation dates. A creation date can refer to the date a letter was written, a map was printed, a portrait was painted, or, the date that an electronic file was created. Creation dates can be assigned at the collection, series, folder, and item level. Depending on the processing level you are working with, you may be recording dates at one or more of those levels. Date information should be derived from a reliable source, most often from evidence in the materials themselves.

### ► Construct an Inclusive Date:

An Inclusive Date represents all materials that are in that level of hierarchy, (the collection, box, series, or folder level). Inclusive dates are a requirement for a collection level record, and are highly valuable at series, subseries, and folder levels of an inventory where time allows. The following are the types of expressions acceptable:

- Yearly increments are the default date type, and are ideal for most circumstances. Your expression will likely resemble one of the following:
  - **1995** for materials which are all dated 1995.
  - **1886, 1901** for materials which date either 1886 or 1901.
  - **1942-1971** for materials which all fall within 1942-1971.

- If significant gaps are noted, you may use a similar expression with the addition of a comma (especially when processing at levels 3 through 5), as the following:
  - **1922, 1950-1992** for materials dating from 1922 with the rest falling between 1950 and 1992 (no materials between 1923 and 1949).
  - **1925-1965, 1980-1993** for materials which fall between two date ranges, 1925 and 1965, and 1980 and 1993 (no materials between 1966 and 1979).
- Use **circa** (**not c or ca**) to indicate known approximate dates and educated guesses. For example:
  - circa 1870-1879
  - circa 1970s
  - circa August 1975
- If you create a circa date you can optionally add further information with one of the following qualifiers **Approximate** or **Inferred** or **Questionable**. Your date will then look like this example:
  - circa 1870-1879, Inferred
- The following types of date expressions are also acceptable:
  - before 1867
  - after 1867 January 5
  - 1892 or 1893
  - 1890s
- If the collection contains material lacking dates and an estimated date is either not possible or would take up too much processing time, use **undated** (**not n.d. or u.d.**). You may use the term **undated** on its own, or you may incorporate the term into a date expression along with actual known dates. Examples are:
  - undated
  - 1965-1970, undated

► If an Inclusive Date has been created and you want to emphasize that fact that the majority of the materials are from a smaller set of dates within the inclusive date, construct an additional date, called the Bulk Date:

Bulk Dates are only used at the collection or series level. Your date expression will have **bulk** inserted before the bulk range, for example:

- **1785-1960, bulk 1916-1952** is a date expression which means that all files fall between 1785 and 1960 but the vast majority of the files fall between 1916 and 1952.

► If materials are all from a single date or you are describing a single item, you can construct a specific single date, expressed as **year month day**, for example, **1906 March 17**.

**TIP:** There are other types of dates such as publication, broadcast, or digitized date. If you think it important to include another date besides creation date, please ask the supervisor. They are covered in section DACS 2.4 if options are needed.

## 6.D. How to Label Physical Boxes and Folders

Print labels are used by both archivists and researchers to find what they need, and these labels need to be accurate, legible, and consistent. Once processing has been completed to the stage where the title of the collection and the number and arrangement of boxes is set, this is the time to create final labels. (Tip: If arrangement and collection order is not certain but you still need to label boxes temporarily for administrative purposes, you may use alphabetical listing or a barcode to identify each box.)

### Labeling Boxes

► Label physical boxes by affixing a white sticker label on the short end of the box, onto which the following information is written in pencil:

1. Write the full collection title on the top of the label. If the title is long, consider using only part of the title, but be consistent throughout.
2. Capitalize the words in the title which are proper nouns, but do not capitalize the materials type (Example records, papers, photographs, etc.)
3. Boxes should be numbered consecutively from 1 to however many boxes there are in the collection.
4. Box numbers should be prominently and consistently marked on box labels.

#### Sample Box Label:



## Labeling Folders

The components of folder labels are:

- Collection name (or at least a consistently applied abbreviation of it)
- Folder title
- Dates
- Box and Folder numbers (University Archives does not always use box or folder numbers, particularly for records collections. You should consult your supervisor when processing a collection for UA).

*See Sample Folder Label below.*

Additional guidelines for labeling folders:

- Capitalize **ONLY** the first word and proper nouns in folder titles. (the rest of the title should be lowercase). For example:
  - **Birth rate and population, 1968-1988**
- Do not use punctuation at the end of the folder title.
- Limit the use of abbreviations. For example:
  - 19<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment **not**: 19<sup>th</sup> Ma. Infantry Regt.

**TIP:** for minimal processing, abbreviate information on the folders, but elaborate or spell out in the online finding aid if more complete information enables discovery.
- If acronyms are used they should be fully introduced at the appropriate level of the finding aid. For example, for an acronym used in a folder title, introduce the full wording plus the acronym in the scope and content note which covers that section of the finding aid. If the abbreviation is relevant to the whole collection, introduce the full wording plus the acronym in the collection level Scope and Content note.
- If the original folder contains too much material to fit into a single new folder safely you may split the material into multiple folders and use sequencing at the end of the folder title in parentheses. For example:
  - *Folder 1: The Rock, galley proof (1 of 2), 1932*
  - *Folder 2: The Rock, galley proof (2 of 2), 1932*

The following guidelines are to be used when processing materials from the Special Collections unit, and for University Archives collections which are not following MPLP practice guidelines. If you are uncertain, ask the supervisor.

- Folders should be numbered within boxes, with both the box and folder numbers clearly and consistently recorded on the folder throughout the entire collection (see Sample Folder Label below).

- Folders should be consecutively numbered from 1 to however many folders there are in a box, with each box starting with a new folder 1.
- If a folder contains multiple copies of a single item, you may note the number of copies at the end of the folder title in parentheses: **(2 copies)**. Parentheses are preferred over brackets. For example:
  - *Northeastern Changes, Northeast Regional Council (2 copies), 1965*
- If the items in a file folder are photocopies of originals convey this at the end of the folder title in parentheses: **(photocopies)**. For example:
  - *Last Will and Testament, Anne Woodrum (photocopy), June 3, 1802*

**Sample Folder Label:**

Lilith Magazine	Birth rate and population, 1968-1988	Box 6 F15
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## 6.E. Finding Aid Notes

### A Note about Anti-Oppressive Language in Archival Description:

When writing collection narration, it is our goal to use less oppressive language. This is particularly important if you are working on a collection with racist and/or oppressive content. Some initial recommendations for improving the voice and style of your description come from the *Metadata Recommendations* section of the **Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources**:

- “Forget about “neutrality.” Describing archival collections is not a neutral act. Instead, consider, “*is the descriptive language I am using respectful to the larger communities of people invested in this record? Decenter ‘neutrality’ and ‘objectivity’ in favor of ‘respect’ and ‘care’.*”
- Do not use the passive voice, especially when discussing oppressive power dynamics. The passive voice removes responsibility from the oppressor.
- Describe the person before their identity. Individuality and humanity should be named before someone’s race, ethnicity, or any other identity marker.
- Refrain from using embellished and/or euphemistic language when describing collection creators, especially in the case of white males and others who the historical record traditionally favors.
- Use honest, accurate language when suitable. This includes terms such as lynching, rape, murder, and hate mail. “*Do not let your discomfort with the terms censor the material. It is okay to be uncomfortable with racist material. It is not okay to privilege your discomfort above accurate description.*”
- Call out oppressive power dynamics when they are important for understanding the context of a collection. “*Racism, slurs, white supremacy, colonialism, and histories of oppression are important context.*”
- From the **Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources**

For full description recommendations, please read through the **Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources** as well as Introduction section [I.D. Prioritizing Social Justice and Working Toward a Reparative Archive](#).

### What are Finding Aid Notes?

Notes are the narrative parts of a finding aid; each note describes a different aspect of the collection. The following sections will provide summaries of each type of finding aid note, and what should be included in them. Be aware, however, that not all notes will be required at every level of description; refer to the fields in your Processing Worksheet to find the required notes for the level at which you are working.



► Things to remember about finding aid notes:

- Notes are usually narrative, though they should not be overly wordy.
- Do not provide opinions, characterizations, evaluations or interpretive statements in these narratives, keep it objective.
- Writing should be accessible to a wide audience. If you include subject-specific jargon or specialized language, also provide more generalized terms.
- Sources of information should be reliable and cited within the note.

## What is a Scope & Content Note?

A Scope and Content note provides an overview of what's in a collection, including the major figures, subjects, and dates of events. You can think of it as a miniature, narrative version of the collection itself, as reading it should allow a researcher to grasp the contents enough to decide whether or not the collection is useful to their study. For this reason, it should concisely highlight the most relevant information, and it should be organized in the same order as the larger collection.

► Refer to the following bullet points (compiled from DACS (Describing Archives: A Content Standard) and Brandeis local practices) for what to include in your Scope and Content Note:

- Subject matter and major themes of the collection - keep in mind that themes documented may differ from a list of possible subjects relevant to the person or organization. Include the roles and activities that led to the creation of the materials in the collection.
- Document types (Example: correspondence, diaries, reports, etc.).
- Dates especially relevant to persons, events, and groups of materials.
- Geographic locations related to the materials.
- Any other relevant information that might be useful for evaluating the collection's research relevance.

For more information on writing a Scope and Content note, refer to DACS 3.1.

## What is an Arrangement Note?

An arrangement note describes the physical organization of the collection. Whether you are maintaining the original order, or rearranging the records into a new hierarchy, you will need to explain the scheme to the user. In this note you can explain the hierarchical breakdown of the records into boxes, series, subseries, etc., as well as the filing scheme, such as alphabetical or chronological order. Arrangement notes are usually included at the collection level only, and any arrangement descriptions at the series level would be included in the series note (see What is a Series Note? below).

► At all levels of processing, choose an established boilerplate statement for the arrangement note. These statements have been designed to give a concise explanation of a collection's arrangement. Examples of notes are:

- This collection has a chronological arrangement.
- This collection has an alphabetical arrangement.
- This collection's arrangement is by subject / series.
- This collection's arrangement is by record type/ format.

You may also combine any of the above, such as:

- This collection has both chronological and alphabetical arrangement.
- This collection is arranged by subject and record format.

You may also add further detail if known, for example:

- This collection is arranged alphabetically by subject or personal name or corporate name.

Also note if there is any difference between the physical arrangement and the arrangement that is in the inventory or finding aid (while not a common practice, this is a method occasionally used in MPLP practice). For example:

- The finding aid lists the materials in alphabetical order, however, the physical materials have not been re-arranged.
- The addendum has not been physically re-arranged, but has been added to the description order of the original finding aid.

You may also state that no order has been noted. This increases transparency around processing actions. Make a statement such as:

- There is no discernable arrangement noted for this collection.

► When processing at a high level (levels 3-5, series, folder, or item level), you may give additional information which identifies the imposed hierarchy. This statement should be brief, and it should provide a high-level explanation of the collection's arrangement. Only lay out the top level of the hierarchy (series level), as the subseries and file arrangement should be addressed in the Series note (see What is a Series Note? below) if necessary.

- *Example: This collection is organized in three series with subseries. The series are as follows: Series 1. Diaries, Series 2. Correspondence, Series 3. Professional Papers.*

For more information on arrangement notes, see DACS 3.2.

## What is a Conditions Governing Use Note?

A Conditions Governing Use note tells researchers what the copyright status is for the collection, as well as explains any other restrictions on the reproduction, publication, or public display of the materials. This note is very important because, though Brandeis might own a collection, it is very possible that the donor or creator has retained the copyright for the materials. Information regarding the copyright status or any use restrictions for the collection should be gathered from the deed of gift and other donor paperwork in the archival control file, current copyright statutes, and/or University policies. A boilerplate statement is used to advise patrons to contact us before any use that is not covered under the Fair Use section of copyright law.

► The current boilerplate statement for this note is as follows:

- **Requests to reproduce or publish material from the collection should be directed to the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.**

## What is a Conditions Governing Access Note?

Materials in a collection may need to be restricted from access by researchers. Restriction might be requested by the donor or implemented by Archive staff. Restrictions are put in place to protect sensitive or confidential information, and are generally enacted for a specific time period, after which the documents will be opened to researchers.

► Keep your eye out when processing for any materials that you think may need to be restricted, and that may not have been noted during accessioning. If you spot anything that you think needs to be restricted, take note of it and discuss it with your supervisor. If you are asked to perform any restrictions work by your supervisor, consult [Chapter 9. Restricting Materials](#), and its criteria for the departmental unit in which you are working.

► The most important restriction-related task for a processor is providing the restriction status of a collection or accession. At Brandeis this is done through the use of a standardized statement. When writing the Conditions Governing Access note, you should choose one of the following boilerplate statements to reflect the access status of the collection as a whole:

- The collection is open for research use and has no known restrictions.
- This collection is closed to researchers at this time. [Include opening date if known, expressed as: Collection will be opened mm/yyyy.]
- This collection contains restricted materials. Please contact the University Archives & Special Collections in advance to request access.
- This collection has not yet been reviewed for access and may contain restricted materials. Please contact the University Archives & Special Collections in advance to request access.

## What is a Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements Note?

This note is used to describe any access restrictions in a collection that are based on the preservation status or technical needs of the materials. According to DACS, this note should be used if archival materials have physical characteristics that severely “limit, restrict, delay, or otherwise affect access to the materials being described,” or if the format of the materials requires technical support for listening or viewing.

► If the collection you are processing has special access requirements related to technology and/or preservation issues, write a brief explanation of those requirements. Examples of such descriptions include:

- This collection has preservation issues and requires staff assistance for handling.
- Original document is too fragile for use, a digitized copy can be obtained through the finding aid.
- The video recordings included in this collection will need to be reformatted prior to use.
- Access to this collection’s digital materials requires use of the Archives’ internal server. These materials can only be accessed in person, and will require staff assistance.

## What is a Processing Information Note?

A processing information note allows you to record the processing history of a collection, as well as to highlight the processing actions you have performed. This note is significant because it increases transparency around archival interventions into the collections under our care.

Brandeis local practices for this note require you to include the following in your description:

- A statement describing earlier processing work done on the collection, and the date of that work.
- Any changes to the physical arrangement of the collection that you have made.
- A statement about the level of work done to investigate and address any restrictions present in the collection.
- A description of any research into the collection’s provenance and/or work done to unravel a case of complex provenance.
- A statement about the appraisal actions taken, including collection materials weeded during processing.
- A statement about the creation of titles at the collection, series, box, folder, and item levels stating whether the titling language was devised by either the current, or a former, processing archivist, or if it was created by the collection’s creator and/or donor.

*Note: Not all of these actions will be necessary for every collection, but if conducted, the above activities should be described in this note.*

► If the collection you are working on had previous processing performed on it, list the type of work performed on the collection and the date when the work was done. Also, describe the work you have done to the collection, as well as the date when you finished processing.

- *Example: Materials were surveyed, arranged, and described at the series level in Fall 2016. In April 2020, arrangement and description were completed to the folder level, and this finding aid produced.*

► Write a brief statement indicating whether or not the collection was reorganized from its original, creator-imposed order. Some possible statements include:

- Collection appears to be in original order imposed by the creator.
- Collection was maintained in the order in which it was received by the archives.
- Collection was restored to its original, creator-imposed order, to the best of the processor's ability.
- Collection was reorganized by the archives to facilitate research use.

► If you have done restrictions work based on chapter 9, record those actions in this statement. Use the following task list below to construct a statement which describes the level of restrictions work performed.

- Previous documentation consulted (name documentation used).
- Box titles were used to conduct a deductive review.
- Folder titles were used to conduct a deductive review.
- Item level review was conducted on full collection.
- Restricted items found during processing/ reference use/ other.
- *Example: To determine restrictions, previous documentation was consulted and folder titles were used for a deductive review.*

► If there are questions surrounding the provenance or custodial history of the collection, write a brief statement describing the actions taken by the processor to mitigate those issues. *Note: the actual provenance statement should be recorded in the Custodial History note, as described below.*

- *Example: The custodial history was reconstructed and compiled through informal interviews with Gordon Fellman in 2018 by the University Archivist.*
- *Example: The custodial history was traced through obtaining an organizational chart and researching staff positions of the originating department.*
- *Example: The provenance was reconstructed through conversations with the archivist who was originally in contact with the donor.*

► If you have performed weeding of duplicative or non-valuable materials during processing, include a statement about the appraisal actions taken. This, like in the case of titling, increases transparency around archival processing activities.

- *Example: Duplicate copies of original documents were removed from the collection.*
- *Example: Personal financial materials were removed from the collection due to low research value.*

► If you have devised titles for your collection (either for the whole collection or for individual boxes, series, folders, and/or items) explain how you came to develop the title(s). This is especially important in cases of collections that might have been compiled by one person, but that contain the records of various people or of a particular community. Conversely, you should also note if titles were created by the materials' creator, or by an earlier processor. This step is especially important as a way of acknowledging when titles might contain outdated and/or potentially harmful language leftover from early modes of description. In addition to noting how the titles were created, you will need to state how these have been illustrated in the inventory (i.e. did you use quotes for creator titles, or brackets for processor titles). Consider the examples below when constructing your statement:

- *Example: This collection was named for Professor Johnson, a member of the English department from 1995-2010, as he was responsible for compiling and donating the materials at the time of his retirement. Some materials in this collection were created by students of Professor Johnson.*
- *Example: Folder titles were assigned by the processor unless otherwise noted. Whenever possible, full names were used within titles to enable keyword searching. Processor titles appear in brackets.*
- *Example: All series titles were originally assigned by the creator, except for Series 1: Family Photographs and Series 4: Financial Records. These titles were assigned by the processor to better reflect the series' contents.*

## What is a Custodial History Note?

According to the Society of American Archivists, "*custodial history can be used to describe both physical possession and intellectual ownership and to provide details of changes of ownership or custody that are significant in terms of authority, integrity, and interpretation.*" Traditionally, this note was used to describe the chain of custody through which a collection passed before being given to your repository. This is important to archival value as it ensures that no materials were unduly separated from or combined with the collection, which might cause confusion or inaccuracies. Knowing the chain of custody is about maintaining archival context.

Today, however, this note is sometimes used to discuss the provenance of a collection, as it relates to the creator(s) of the materials. It is important to acknowledge the true author or maker of collection materials, especially when the *creator* listed in the archival description is actually a

*compiler*. This is most significant in the case of marginalized communities whose creative works, legal records, etc. are collected and donated by someone from outside that group.

Please refer to Introduction section I.D. Prioritizing Social Justice and Working Toward a Reparative Archive for a full description of our working definition of provenance, and the ways in which it relates to anti-oppressive archival practice.

Provenance is a complex topic when it comes to archival work. There are various situations which might produce an archival collection with unclear provenance, and the goal of a processor should be to acknowledge the full known context of the records under their care. Some examples of these situations include but are not limited to:

- Collections created by a particular community, but compiled by an outside individual.
- Abandoned student work compiled by a professor or academic department.
- An organizational merger which transfers ownership of one organization's records to a second, different entity.
- A collection of materials collected from various sources around a specific subject.

► Write a brief statement describing the provenance of the materials. This statement can have varying levels of complexity, depending on whether or not there are custodial issues present. If there are issues of custody or creatorship present, be sure to explain the situation as clearly as possible, acknowledging the difference between creator and compiler, and any known reasons why the materials were collected together. The following are examples of possible provenance statements:

- *Example (Basic Provenance Statement): The John Smith papers were held by the creator's family from the time of his death. The papers were donated to Brandeis University in 2010.*
- *Example (Compiled Records): This collection documents correspondence, ephemera, and first-hand accounts from the Black community in Waltham during the Civil Rights Movement. These papers were collected by Professor Jacob Johnson, who is credited as the creator of this collection, while conducting research. These materials were brought together in an attempt to make the daily life and activism efforts of people of color in this period more widely understood. The archives acknowledge the problematic nature of naming as creator a person who did not, in fact, create the materials. Provenance reconstruction has allowed our staff to acknowledge the significance and contribution of the following record creators, whilst naming Professor Johnson as the collection's compiler: [list creator names here].*
- *Example (Abandoned Work): The custodial history of this collection is varied, as some materials were created by Gordon Fellman but many were not. Specifically, the materials on the Ford Hall Takeover of 1969 and the National Strike Information Center were largely created by the students involved in those efforts. The majority of the National Strike Information Center materials consist of items left behind by the activists who were working from the Sociology Department offices. The Ford Hall Takeover materials have*

*various creators, including students from both inside and outside of the movement, administrators, faculty, and other community members. The materials documenting Ford Hall were sought out, collected, and then curated by Gordon Fellman for many years before they came to the archives, and have become inseparable from his personal files.*

- *Example (Organizational Merger): The site of Brandeis University once belonged to Middlesex University; Middlesex transferred its charter and property to the founders of Brandeis University in 1946. The materials in this collection have been donated from various sources, including alumni of Middlesex, however a good deal of the material has been donated by Charles Ruggles Smith, the son of Middlesex's founder, John Hall Smith. Middlesex alumni records and grade books have been transferred from Brandeis' Office of the Registrar over time. Administrative files were transferred by Helene Greenberg in the GSAS office on July 19, 2010.*
- *Example (Subject Collection): The materials in The Blue House collection were collected by a previous archive staff member, from various donors. This collection was constructed in order to present a history of the home and its many occupants over the years of its existence as a family home. The architectural photographs were taken on behalf of Brandeis by Jane Jones, from 2000-2005. Other photographic materials were gifted by the last family to occupy the house, the Dawson family. Blueprints and ephemera were gifted to the archives by John Morris, caretaker of the property from 1965-1985.*

## What is a Series Note?

A series note serves as a combination Scope and Content note and Arrangement note for the series level. In this note you can give a brief overview of the content included in the series, as well as explain in more detail the series/subseries/file arrangement scheme if one is present. According to the Society of American Archivists, a series description can include *"the title, scope and content note, size or volume, dates of the material, and arrangement [of the series]."*

The use of series notes is particularly important when processing at level 3 (series level), because it gives you the opportunity to include searchable keywords related to people, events, and subjects discussed in the series. Keywords are useful at the series level as there are no folder- or item-level descriptions to provide access points to specific subjects.

► Give a concise description of the scope and content of the series. Remember to include the most important subjects, events, dates, and people.

► The arrangement statement can be twofold, just as at the collection level. First, consider adapting one of the collection-level arrangement statements, such as:

- This series has a chronological arrangement.
- This series has an alphabetical arrangement.
- This series' arrangement is by subject.



- This series' arrangement is by record type/ format.

You may also combine any of the above, such as:

- This series has both chronological and alphabetical arrangement.
- This series is arranged by subject and record format.

You may also add further detail if known, for example:

- This series is arranged alphabetically by (subject or personal name or corporate name).

► When processing at a high level (levels 3-5, series-item level), and your series contains subseries, files, or items, you may also give a more detailed description of the imposed hierarchy. This statement should be brief, and it should provide a high-level explanation of the series' arrangement.

- *Example: This series contains 3 subseries, all of which are arranged chronologically. The subseries are as follows: Subseries 1. Correspondence, 1850-1859; Subseries 2. Correspondence, 1860-1869; Subseries 3. Correspondence, 1870-1879.*

# Chapter 7. Entering Finding Aid Data Using an Upload Spreadsheet

ArchivesSpace allows for bulk upload of descriptive components through the use of a spreadsheet. Components, in ArchivesSpace, can be series titles, subseries titles, folder titles and item titles. Descriptions may be bulk uploaded at any level in the finding aid hierarchy. For example, you can upload a spreadsheet file that contains multiple subseries and folder titles to a series level in the finding aid, or, you can upload a long list of folder titles to a collection level in the finding aid.

## 7.A. The Upload Spreadsheet Template

A previously created template must be used for this work. Columns in the spreadsheet are used for various fields of description for a single component, so for example, if you are describing a folder, you will enter information in several columns for metadata on that folder. Some fields will be evident and easy to understand, such as **Title**, and **Date Expression**. Others have specific meaning to the organizational aspects of ArchivesSpace finding aids such as: **EAD ID**, **Hierarchical Relationship**, and **Description Level**.

Here is a screenshot of part of the upload spreadsheet showing field headings and a sample file description:

ead	ref_id	title	unit_id	hierarchy	level	publish	dates_label	date_type	expression	cont_instance_type	type
EAD ID	Ref ID	Title	Component Unique Identifier	Hierarchical relationship of new component to context object. 1=the first level of archival objects, 2=second	Description Level	Publish?	Dates Label	Dates Type	Date expression	Container Instance Type	Top type
03MWA1800310A		Materials for Jewish Studies Courses (schedules, brochures, correspondence), includes Brandeis Hillel brochure (1972)			1 File			inclusive	1970-1973, und Mixed Materials Bo		

- Locate the Upload Spreadsheet Template, located in the internal fileshare.
- Save a copy of the template to the Processing Folder and name it after the collection or components of a collection. Alternatively, you may copy the template to Google Sheets, but make sure the supervisor has access.
- Fill out the spreadsheet following the list of fields and rules below. Each of these fields pertains to a single row, which represents a single component, such as one folder. Items will be uploaded in the order of the rows.

## 7.B. List of Fields and Rules

Field	Rule	<u>MPLP</u> Tip
<b>Field name</b>	Leave blank	Not applicable.
<b>Resource Identifier</b>	Leave blank	Not applicable.
<b>EAD ID</b>	This is the same number as listed in the <u>ArchivesSpace</u> finding aid under <b>Finding Aid Number</b> . It begins with <b>MWaLB</b> and this field is required in order to make the upload work.	This will be the same number for all components in your spreadsheet, so use automated duplication of data in the spreadsheet to replicate the first row.
<b>Title</b>	Title of component, which may be a series title, box title, subseries title, folder title, or item title.	Check to see if a previous inventory exists from the donor or from an earlier archival process. Pasting from a previous digital list is ideal, if possible.
<b>Component Unique Identifier</b>	Leave blank, this will be filled in automatically by ArchivesSpace.	Not applicable.
<b>Hierarchy</b> (See <u>7.F. Note about Hierarchical Arrangement</u> )	Number that corresponds to hierarchy level in finding aid, usually a 1 for a single level component list. Note that the number will depend on the place in the hierarchy in which the spreadsheet will be uploaded. Also note that you can enter components at several levels with the same spreadsheet. For example, you can list the series at 1 and the subseries at 2 and the folders at 3.	If all numbers in the hierarchy are the same, use automated duplication of data in the spreadsheet to replicate the first row.
<b>Description Level</b>	Type series, subseries, file (which means folder), or item.	If all levels are the same, use automated duplication of data in the spreadsheet to replicate the first row.
<b>Publish?</b>	Leave blank, defaults to FALSE.	Not applicable.

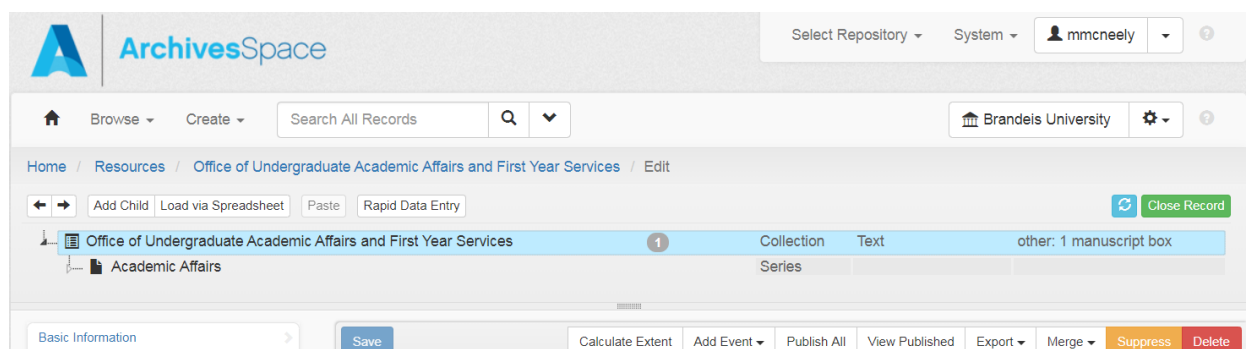
Field	Rule	<u>MPLP</u> Tip
<b>Dates Label</b>	Leave blank if your date is a creation date, as the upload defaults to Creation. To describe another type of date, check with the supervisor.	Not applicable.
<b>Dates Type</b>	Type <b>bulk</b> , <b>single</b> , or <b>inclusive</b> .	If all types are the same, use automated duplication of data in the spreadsheet to replicate the first row.
<b>Date Expression</b>	<p>Enter the date, expressed as a year (yyyy), a range of years (yyyy-yyyy), or a single date (MM-DD-YYYY). Note that there is no required formula for date, you may do multiple expressions (yyyy-yyyy, yyyy), or include <b>undated</b> (yyyy-yyyy, undated).</p> <p><i>[Note: It is not possible to use the calendar function to select precise start and end dates using the spreadsheet upload method].</i></p>	The terms <b>approximately</b> or <b>circa</b> can be used in the date expression field if not all of the materials have been thoroughly surveyed. Less specificity is ok for processing at the series and box levels, and in many cases is completely suitable even at the folder level.
<b>Container Instance Type</b>	If they are only text, type <b>text</b> . Type <b>mixed materials</b> if there is a mix of material types across the group of components. Less commonly, you may identify them as <b>graphic materials</b> , <b>moving images</b> , <b>computer disks</b> , <b>books</b> , or <b>realia</b> .	Use of <b>Mixed Materials</b> for all components being uploaded is encouraged unless materials are being described at the folder or item level. <b>Text</b> can also be used for all if you observe that an entire series, box, or collection is text. If unsure, use <b>Mixed Materials</b> .
<b>Top Container Type</b>	Type <b>box</b> , <b>folder</b> , <b>object</b> , or <b>other</b> .	Not applicable.
<b>Top Container Indicator</b>	This is the number of the container. For example, the box number or object number which has been assigned to the component.	Not applicable.

*Note: MPLP means **More Product, Less Process**, and is a way to designate accepted reductions in processing labor to increase efficiency. Inquire first with the supervisor as to whether you should use the MPLP tips which are more than just data automations.*

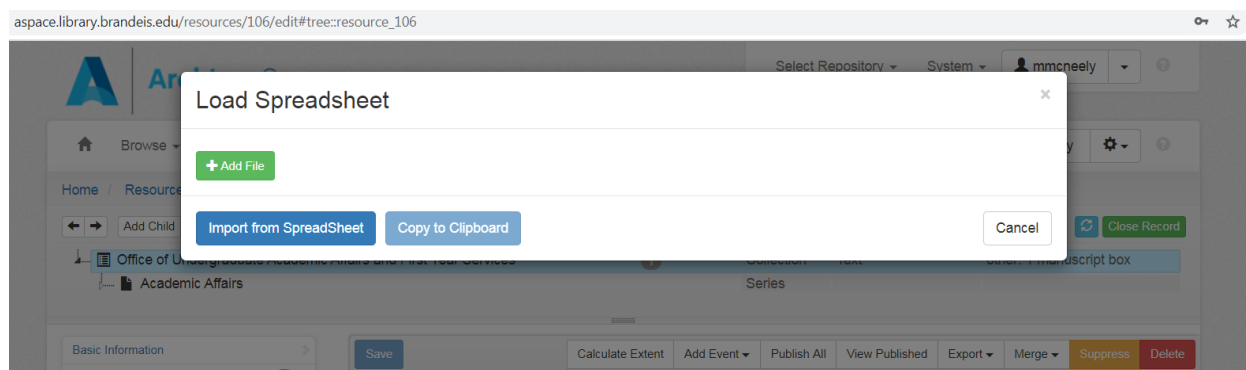
## 7.C. Spreadsheet Upload Process

► When your spreadsheet is complete and checked, use the following steps to upload it to ArchivesSpace.

1. Log in to ArchivesSpace using an account which has permissions to create containers (the ArchiveStudent account does not have these privileges).
2. Click **Browse** and then **Resources**.
3. Use the ArchivesSpace search bar to locate the Resource (Collection) you are working on.
4. Select **Edit** so that you are in edit mode.
5. Click the hierarchical entity under which the data will be uploaded so that the level is highlighted in blue. (If you have all series and folders in your spreadsheet, you will want to be clicked on the collection level. If you are adding many folders to a series, you will want to be clicked on the series into which they will go. See Chapter 7 section 7.F. Note about Hierarchical Arrangement.)



6. Click **Load via Spreadsheet**.
7. Click **Add File** in pop-up window.



8. Navigate to the spreadsheet you want to upload, select, and click **Open**. If you are using Google Sheets, you will want to have your spreadsheet downloaded and saved as an .xlsx file.
9. Click **Import Spreadsheet**. The system will run the spreadsheet upload at this point, it may take several minutes. You will either get an error message or a success message.

► If the upload was a success:

1. Close the report window so that you can look at the finding aid again to check that the upload performed as you intended.
2. Check the part of the finding aid hierarchy that you added components to and make sure they appear at the level intended.
3. Check to see if the first row of data was uploaded, as sometimes it skips the first row. If it skipped this row, you can add it manually, or you can add a substitute line of description to the first row of your spreadsheet and try the upload again.
4. Check that the full list of components appears in the finding aid.
5. Click **Save**.

► If there is an error report, check the finding aid to ascertain whether it was a full error resulting in zero new components, or whether it was a partial error, resulting in some but not all components being created.

1. If it is a partial error:
  - a. Check for individual errors in the spreadsheet rows. The most likely explanation is that the answers in spreadsheet columns do not correspond exactly to the field rules above.
  - b. If an error is found and fixed in the spreadsheet, you will most likely want to delete the records which were created so you can start the upload process over, otherwise duplicate components will be created.
  - c. Return to the directions above to begin the upload again.
2. If it is a full error:
  - a. Examine the following possible causes:
    - i. Forgetting to list the EAD ID in the spreadsheet and finding aid before upload.
    - ii. The account being used does not have permissions to create containers.
    - iii. Extra rows are present in the spreadsheet. Try either deleting empty rows beneath your data, or uploading the spreadsheet as a Google Spreadsheet and then downloading as an .xlsx file before trying to upload it to ArchivesSpace.
  - b. If no error can be determined, you can contact Library Systems, as they have an error log and may be able to pinpoint the problem.
3. Return to the directions above to begin the upload again.

## 7.D. Publish the Finding Aid

You will be saving your progress often in ArchivesSpace, but you will not publish the finding aid until it has been reviewed by the supervisor. Once a finding aid has been officially approved, the finding aid is published by the collections manager by clicking **Publish All** on the collection level record.

## 7.E. Update the Processing Status

After the finding aid is published, the collections manager will update the Processing Folder, collections database, and any additional unit records.

## 7.F. Note about Hierarchical Arrangement

Hierarchy can be the trickiest issue with the spreadsheet method, so here are some examples of a list of series and folders and what hierarchy they would be listed in under a spreadsheet.

### **Hierarchy Level Examples:**

Example 1: Three series and eight folders or files which are being placed under a Resource (Collection) record. The collection name is not listed, but would be selected or highlighted when you prepare to upload.

*Collection name: Robert Stein papers (not listed in Upload Spreadsheet)*

*Series 1: Correspondence*

*Folder 1: Stuart James*

*Folder 2: O'Brien, Carl*

*Folder 3: Smith, Germaine*

*Series 2: Awards*

*Folder 1: Citizen of the World*

*Folder 2: Rumelhart Prize*

*Series 3: Writings*

*Folder 1: From Here to There*

*Folder 2: Ghosts of our Present*

*Folder 3: Love is All We Have*

E	F	G	H
title	unit_id	hierarchy	level
Title	Component Unique Identifier	Hierarchical relationship of new component to context object. 1=the first level of archival objects, 2=second	Description Level
Correspondence			1 Series
James, Stuart			2 File
O'Brien, Carl			2 File
Smith, Germaine			2 File
Awards			1 Series
Citizen of the World			2 File
Rumelhart Prize			2 File
Writings			1 Series
From Here to There			2 File
Ghosts of our Present			2 File
Love is All We Have			2 File

Example 2: Two subseries plus six folders or files being added at the series level. The series we are working under, called **Publicity**, is not listed as in this example it is already in the finding aid. That series name would be selected or highlighted when you prepare to upload.

Collection name: Office of Admissions records (not listed in Upload Spreadsheet)

Series 2: Publicity (not listed in Upload Spreadsheet)

Subseries 1: General brochures

Folder 1: Early years

Folder 2: School of Arts and Sciences

Folder 3: Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Folder 4: Heller School for Social Policy

Subseries 2: Press Releases

Folder 1: Fast Facts

Folder 2: Anniversaries



E	F	G	H
title	unit_id	hierarchy	level
Title	Component Unique Identifier	Hierarchical relationship of new component to context object. 1=the first level of archival objects, 2=second	Description Level
General Brochures			1 Sub-series
Early years			2 File
School of Arts and Sciences			2 File
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences			2 File
Heller School for Social Policy			2 File
Press Releases			1 Sub-series
Fast Facts			2 File
Anniversaries			2 File

## Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace

Please note: The directions in this chapter were designed for version 1.5.4 of ArchivesSpace. They were also written several years prior to the manual, and the user may notice that there are some inconsistencies in practice between this chapter and the rest of the manual. When inconsistencies are found, the manual user should favor other chapters over Chapter 8.

### 8.A. Log in To ArchivesSpace

1. Go to: <https://ArchivesSpace.library.brandeis.edu/>
2. Username: archivestudent
3. Password: see Archives staff

TIP: Check to see if the collection you are describing has an accession record. If it does, you can “Spawn” a Resource Record. See Archives staff.

### 8.B. Create an Accession Record

1. Go to ArchivesSpace homepage.
2. From the main toolbar at the top the ArchivesSpace homepage, click **Create** then **Accession**. A **New Accession** page will appear. Fill in the following fields:

#### Title

1. Give the collection a title that reflects what you know about it. This is a temporary title that can be changed when you know more about the material.
2. Enter a combination of the creator name and a term describing the type of materials. (*Example: Louis Brandeis diaries*)
  - a. The term describing the materials can be general (*papers, records*) or specific (*letters, speeches, photographs, etc.*).
  - b. The title of the accession will usually, but need not always, match the title of the collection to which the accession belongs. (*Example: Louis Brandeis diaries will become part of Louis Dembitz Brandeis collection.*)

#### Identifier

1. In the first field, enter the classification number. **IMPORTANT: For Special Collections enter 11.**
2. In the second field, enter the year of the accession. (*Example: 2011*)
3. In the third field, enter the month the accession took place. (*Example: 09*)
4. In the fourth field, enter the number of the accession for that month. (*Example: 01*)

*Example: The following is the identifier for the Jeremy and Muriel Josse Collection of Holy Land Maps.*

11	2011	09	01
----	------	----	----

- a. 11 indicates that this collection is Special Collections.
- b. 2011 shows that the material was deposited in 2011.
- c. 09 shows that it was donated in September.
- d. 01 means that it was the first accession that month.

**TIP:** To find out accession dates for Special Collections for the Identifier fields, you will be provided with a copy of the accession record.

## Accession Date

1. Enter the date that the materials came into the department. Enter as **YYYY-MM-DD**.

## Content Description

1. Enter a preliminary overview of the material or collection. This should be a brief note but try include the following, if apparent:
  - a. The amount of material.
  - b. Types of material.
  - c. Information about the person or organization who created the material and why these materials were created. (*Example: are they the result of activities or functions? What do they document?*)
  - d. Topics or subjects covered.
  - e. Approximate date ranges of the material.
  - f. Include any special items of note. (*Example: "includes Victor Young's Oscar award."*)
  - g. Information the donor told you about the material.

## Condition Description

1. Use one of the following to describe the collection:
  - a. Good
  - b. Fair
  - c. Poor
  - d. Brittle and/or Fragile
2. Include a preservation note if it is clear that work needs to be done.
  - a. *For example:*
    - i. *needs staples removed.*
    - ii. *needs re-boxing and re-folding.*
    - iii. *needs preservation photocopying of news clippings.*

## Disposition

1. Describe how an accession was assigned to a different collection, such as:
  - a. *Example: the Sacco and Vanzetti pamphlets were added to the Sacco and Vanzetti Miscellaneous collection.*
  - b. *Example: Will be integrated into the University History Collection.*
  - c. *Example: Added to Middlesex University Collection.*

## Inventory

1. Include information about where to find box lists or an external document.
  - a. *Example: preliminary box lists available in the Roger Tory Peterson folder in the fileshare.*

## Provenance

1. Provide information about the ownership or creation of the accession, including custodial history and acquisition information, etc.
  - a. *Example: mailed by donor.*
  - b. *Example: collected and delivered by Dr. Gordon Fellman.*
  - c. *Example: from the personal collection of Arlan Ettinger.*
  - d. *Example: from Shiffman basement.*

## Acquisition Type

1. From the drop-down menu choose one of the following:
  - a. Deposit
  - b. Gift
  - c. Purchase
  - d. Transfer

## Resource Type

1. Choose one of the following:
  - a. **Collection:** use this for collections that are intentionally assembled. Collection implies that the material was collected.
  - b. **Records:** use this for collections that were created by a corporate body or organization (rather than a person) and the collection contains more than one form of documents.
  - c. **Papers:** use this for collections that were created by an individual or family and contain more than one form of personal papers.

## Restrictions Apply

1. Check this box only if the collection contains restricted materials. Otherwise, leave u
2. nchecked.

## Publish

1. **IMPORTANT:** Leave unchecked. Accessions should remain unpublished.

## Access Restrictions

1. Check this box if the Accession contains restricted material. Such as student correspondence, etc.

## Access Restrictions Note

1. Enter information about restricted material, the scope of the restriction (*Restricted - Fully, Restricted - Partly, etc.*), and how long the restriction will be in effect.

## Use Restrictions

1. Check this box if there are any restrictions on using or copying any material in the collection.

## Use Restrictions Note

1. Enter more information about the use restriction here.
  - a. *Example: Material may not be reproduced without the written permission of the Brandeis family.*
  - b. *Example: Material in Box 3 is extremely fragile.*

## Dates

Use these fields to record the dates the material was originally created, assembled, published or broadcast. Consult DACS 2.4.

1. **Label:** from the drop-down list, choose **Creation**.
2. **Type:** select **Inclusive** or **Single** from the drop-down menu.
  - a. **Inclusive Dates:** if the collection has a range of dates.
    - i. Select **Inclusive dates**.
    - ii. Enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields.

- iii. **Expression:** use this text field to record estimated date ranges, materials lacking dates, and/or non-contiguous dates. Do not use the Date Expression field if you know the exact dates. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for guidance on estimated dates.
      - 1. If the collection contains material lacking dates, use **undated** (not n.d.). Undated materials always follow dated or approximately dated materials. *Example: Sassy Girl correspondence, 1968-1972, undated.*
      - 2. Use **circa** (not c. or ca) to indicate known approximate dates.
  - b. **Single Date:** if the collection is a single date.
    - i. Select **Single date**.
    - ii. Enter the date in the **Begin** field.
    - iii. **Expression:** use this text field to record an estimated single date if you are unsure about the date or if the material lacks a date. Leave blank if you have the exact single date. Consult [DACS 2.4.12](#) for guidance on estimated dates.
      - 1. Use **undated** (not n.d.) for materials lacking dates. Undated materials always follow dated or approximately dated materials. (*Example: Fiesty Girl correspondence, circa 1991, undated.*)
      - 2. Use **circa** (not c. or ca) to indicate known approximate date.
  - c. **Bulk Dates:** Bulk dates are used when the majority of the materials being described fall within a date span that is different from (or smaller than) the Inclusive Dates. Bulk Dates clear up any misleading information about Inclusive Dates. **IMPORTANT:** Bulk Dates should always be used in conjunction with Inclusive Dates. You will need to create **two** Date sub-records (one for Inclusive and one for Bulk). Consult [DACS 2.4.10](#) for guidance on Bulk Dates.
    - i. Go to the Date sub-record and click **Add Date**. A second Date sub-record will appear.
    - ii. **Label:** from the drop-down list, choose **Creation**.
    - iii. **Type:** select **Bulk Dates**.
    - iv. Enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields.

## Extents

Use this field to record the size of the collection. TIP: record center box = 1 linear feet; 1 hollinger box = .5 linear feet.

- 1. **Portion:** select **whole**.
- 2. **Number:** enter the number of linear feet.
- 3. **Type:** select **Linear Feet**.
- 4. **Container Summary:** indicate the number of containers in the collection by type of container, starting with the largest number. *Note: brown boxes are record center boxes; grey boxes are manuscript boxes.*

*Example: 5 manuscript boxes, 1 record center box, 1 oversize manuscript box.*

## Agents

Use the Agents field to record the Creator or Compiler of the material, and the Donor or Source.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have to create a new Agent record, check the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF) via LC Linked Data Service for an established or authorized name. If there is no record in LCNAF, consult DACS 2.6, DACS 9-9.4 and DACS 10.1-10.4 for rules about creators and forming names for persons, families and corporate bodies.

Steps for creating an Agent record for a Creator:

**TIP:** see DACS 2.6 and DACS 9-9.10 for rules about Creators.

1. Click on the **Add Agent Link** button.
2. **Role:** from the drop-down menu, select **Creator**.
3. **Relator:** Skip unless the creator is the *compiler or collector* of the collection. (*Example: Gordon Hall collected material in the Hall-Hoag Extremist Literature collection*). For collectors as creators, select **Collector** from the Relator drop-down menu.
4. **Agents: IMPORTANT:** Before creating a new Agent record, first search or browse to see if it already exists in ArchivesSpace. If an agent doesn't exist, Create an agent.
  - a. Browse list of Agents:
    - i. Click the down arrow, select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Agents.
    - ii. Select the relevant Agent.
    - iii. Click on the **Link to Agents** button.
  - b. Create an Agent:
    - i. Click the down arrow.
    - ii. Select **Create**.
      1. Select **Person** for the name the name of an individual.
      2. Select **Family** if the entire family is the creator (*Example: the Spitzer Family*) or if no first name is available.
      3. Select **Corporate Entity** for institutions or organizations.
  - iii. A **Create an Agent** page will appear.
    1. **Dates of Existence:** click the **Add Date** button on the far right.
      - a. **Label:** Select **Existence**.
      - b. **Expression:** You will use this field if your dates are estimated. Skip this field for now. Instructions are listed below.
      - c. **Type:** from the drop-down menu, select **Range**. Begin and End Date fields will appear.
      - d. In the **Begin** field, enter the date of birth as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
      - e. In the **End** field, enter the date of death as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.

- f. Leave Certainty, Era, and Calendar fields blank.
- g. **Expression:** Use the **Expression** field if you are not certain about the dates. Follow the rules for estimating date ranges in DACS 2.4.12. (*Example: circa 1970-2016*).
2. **Authority ID:** Enter the unique identifier from the database in which you found the established name of creator. In the LC Linked Data Service (Highly Recommended) this will be a URI located at the top of the record. For example, Authority ID for Lewis Feuer in LCNAF is <http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50001240>. (**n50001240** is also acceptable).
3. **Source:** Enter the Source that your Authority ID came from. Leave this field blank if your name does not come from an authoritative source like LCNAF or if it is created by following DACS rules.
4. **Rules:** If you are creating the name using DACS, select **Describing Archives: A Content Standard**. Otherwise, skip. If your name comes from LCNAF, skip this field.
5. **Name Order:** Select **Indirect**.
6. **Primary Part of Name:** Enter last name.
7. **Rest of Name:** Enter first name.
8. **Dates:** The dates you enter here will be displayed in the name entry. (*Example: Lewis Feuer, 1912-2002*). Dates should match dates in the name entry (if you are using an authority file). Also, dates here should match Dates of Existence fields.
9. Click **Link to Agent** button.

Steps for creating an Agent record for a Source or Donor: Use Agents to enter the donor or source of collection.

1. Click **Add Agent**.
2. **Role:** Select **Source**.
3. **Relator:** Use **Donor** if it's a gift. Use **Bookseller** if it's purchased from a book dealer, etc.
4. **Agents: IMPORTANT:** Before creating a new Agent record, first search or browse to see if it already exists in ArchivesSpace. If an agent doesn't exist, Create an agent.
  - a. Browse list of Agents:
    - i. Click the down arrow, select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Agents.
    - ii. Select the relevant Agent.
    - iii. Click on the **Link to Agents** button.
  - b. Create an Agent:
    - i. Click the down arrow.
    - ii. Select **Create**.
      1. Select **Person** for the name the name of an individual.



2. Select **Family** if the entire family is the creator (*Example: the Spitzer Family*) or if no first name is available.
  3. Select **Corporate Entity** for institutions or organizations.
- iii. A **Create an Agent** page will appear.
1. **Dates of Existence:** click the **Add Date** button on the far right.
    - a. **Label:** Select **Existence**.
    - b. **Expression:** You will use this field if your dates are estimated. Skip this field for now. Instructions are listed below.
    - c. **Type:** from the drop-down menu, select **Range**. Begin and End Date fields will appear.
    - d. In the **Begin** field, enter the date of birth as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
    - e. In the **End** field, enter the date of death as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
    - f. Leave Certainty, Era, and Calendar fields blank.
    - g. **Expression:** Use the **Expression** field if you are not certain about the dates. Follow the rules for estimating date ranges in DACS 2.4.12. (*Example: circa 1970-2016*).
  2. **Authority ID:** Enter the unique identifier from the database in which you found the established name of creator. In the LC Linked Data Service (Highly Recommended) this will be a URI located at the top of the record. For example, Authority ID for Lewis Feuer in LCNAF is <http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50001240>. (**n50001240** is also acceptable).
  3. **Source:** Enter the Source that your Authority ID came from. Leave this field blank if your name does not come from an authoritative source like LCNAF or if it is created by following DACS rules.
  4. **Rules:** If you are creating the name using DACS, select **Describing Archives: A Content Standard**. Otherwise, skip. If your name comes from LCNAF, skip this field.
  5. **Name Order:** Select **Indirect**.
  6. **Primary Part of Name:** Enter last name.
  7. **Rest of Name:** Enter first name.
  8. **Dates:** The dates you enter here will be displayed in the name entry. (*Example: Lewis Feuer, 1912-2002*). Dates should match dates in the name entry (if you are using an authority file). Also, dates here should match Dates of Existence fields.
  9. Click **Link to Agent** button.

Click Save Accession button.

## 8.C. Create A Resource Record

1. Go to ArchivesSpace homepage.
2. From the main toolbar at the top of the page, click **Create** and select **Resource**. The **New Resource** page will appear.

### Basic Information

The top section of the **New Resource** page is entitled **Basic Information**. Fill out the following required fields.

1. **Title:** Enter the collection title. This will usually contain the name of the creator and a term stating the nature of the archival unit. To determine title, consult DACS 2.3.
  - a. All proper nouns should be capitalized.
  - b. Description of the materials or archival unit should be lower case. (*Example: Marcel Proust correspondence; Carl Van Vechten photographs*).
2. **Identifier:** A&SC identifier numbers begin with **MWaiB** and are followed by a unique five-digit number that usually begins with 0. Consult A&SC staff to determine that number. In the case of University Archives collections, that number is followed by an **A**.
  - a. The Identifier field consists of 4 text boxes. In the first box, enter the Classifications number. For Special Collections, this number will be 11.
  - b. In the second box, enter collection identifier number. (*Example: MWaiB02917*)
  - c. For University Archives collections, the collection identifier number will be followed by an **A**. (*Example: MWaiB00023A*).
3. **Level of Description:** Select **Collection**.
4. **Resource Type:** Select **Official Records**, **Personal Papers**, or **Collection**, etc. from the drop-down menu. Consult DACS 2.3.19 - 2.3.21 or Archives staff to select appropriate type.
  - a. For collections created by individuals, use **Personal Papers**.
  - b. For collections created by official bodies (such as organizations, departments and offices, U.S. government, etc.) select **Official Records**.
  - c. When describing an intentionally assembled collection, use **Collection**.
5. **Language: IMPORTANT:** This field is not required in ArchivesSpace but is required by DACS. Be sure to fill this out.
  - a. Select the predominant language of the materials being described. List the other languages represented in the Scope and Content note. Consult DACS 4.5.
  - b. Click the **Save Resource** button located on the left-hand side of the screen.

## Enter Dates

Use these fields to record the dates the material was originally created, assembled, published or broadcast. Consult [DACS 2.4](#).

1. **Label:** from the drop-down list, choose Creation.
2. **Type:** select **Inclusive** or **Single** from the drop-down menu.

**TIP:** use Bulk Dates when the materials fall within a smaller span of time within the Inclusive Dates and therefore the Inclusive Dates are misleading. For Bulk Dates, you will need to create a second date sub-record (in conjunction with the Inclusive Dates sub-record). Go to step C for more about creating Bulk Dates.

- a. **Inclusive Dates:** Select if the collection has a range of dates,
  - i. Select **Inclusive dates**.
  - ii. Enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields.
  - iii. **Expression:** Use for estimated dates, etc. See **Tips** below.

**TIP #1:** Use the **Expression** text field to record estimated date ranges, materials lacking dates, and/or non-contiguous dates. Do not use the Date Expression field if you know the exact dates. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for guidance on estimated dates.

**TIP #2:** Use **circa** (not c. or ca) to indicate known approximate dates and educated guesses. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for additional guidance.

**TIP #3:** If the collection contains material lacking dates and an estimated date would be misleading, use **undated** (not n.d.). See [DACS 2.4.16](#).

- b. **Single Date:** Use if the collection has a single date.
  - i. Select **Single date**.
  - ii. Enter the date in the **Begin** field.
  - iii. **Expression:** Use this field for an estimated date. See **Tips** below.

**TIP #1:** Use the **Expression** text field to record estimated date ranges, materials lacking dates, and/or non-contiguous dates. Do not use the Date Expression field if you know the exact dates. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for guidance on estimated dates.

**TIP #2:** Use **circa** (not c. or ca) to indicate known approximate dates and educated guesses. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for additional guidance.

**TIP #3:** If the collection contains material lacking dates and an estimated date would be misleading, use **undated** (not n.d.). See [DACS 2.4.16](#).

- c. **Bulk Dates:** Bulk dates are used when the majority of the materials being described fall within a date span that is different from (or smaller than) the

Inclusive Dates. Bulk Dates clear up any misleading information about Inclusive Dates. **IMPORTANT:** Bulk Dates should always be used in conjunction with Inclusive Dates. You will need to create two Date sub-records (both Inclusive and Bulk). Consult [DACS 2.4.10](#) for guidance on Bulk Dates.

- i. Go to the Date sub-record and click **Add Date**.
- ii. **Label:** from the drop-down list, choose **Creation**.
- iii. **Type:** select **Bulk Date**.
- iv. Enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields.
- v. In the **Expression** field, enter the dates preceded by **bulk**. *Example: 1785-1960, bulk 1916-1958.*

## Enter Extents

Use these fields to record the size of the collection in linear feet. Consult [DACS 2.5](#).

1. **Portion:** Select **Whole** from the drop-down menu.
2. **Number:** Enter the number of linear feet. When calculating linear feet, keep the following in mind:
  - a. 1 brown box (record center box) = 1 linear foot.
  - b. 1 grey box (manuscript box) = 0.5 linear feet.
  - c. [Yale University's Linear Footage calculator](#)
  - d. **Type:** From the drop-down menu, select **linear feet**.
  - e. **Container Summary:** In this text field, indicate the number of containers in the collection by type of container.
    - i. For type of container, use:
      1. **Record center box** for brown box.
      2. **Manuscript box** for grey boxes.
      3. **Half manuscript box**, etc.
    - ii. Enter the number of containers in the collection, followed by the type of container.
    - iii. Start with the largest number. (*Example: 4 manuscript boxes, 2 oversized folders, 1 clamshell box.*)
3. Click the **Save Resource** button located on the left-hand side of the screen.

## Enter Finding Aid Data

1. **EAD ID:** Enter the Collection Identifier number. (*Example: MWAIB02727*).
2. **Finding Aid Title:** Enter the title of the collection. (*Example: Nahum Goldmann papers*).
3. **Finding Aid Date:** Enter the date the finding aid was completed. Follow rules for formulating dates in [DACS 2.4](#).
4. **Finding Aid Author:** Enter the name of the individual(s) who created the finding aid. You can use the Processing Information note to acknowledge other contributions and contributors.
5. **Language of Description:** Enter **English**.
6. **Description Rules:** Select **Describing Archives: A Content Standard**.

## Agent Links

Agent records in ArchivesSpace are used to represent names of persons, families, and corporate bodies. Agent records are standalone records that can be linked to various objects such as Resource records, Accession records, and Digital Objects in ArchivesSpace.

Agent records can be linked in different roles, including Creators, Sources, and Subjects.

- **Creator:** Use this role when the Agent was responsible for the creation, assembly, accumulation and/or maintenance and use, etc. of the materials being described.
- **Source:** Use this role when the Agent was responsible for the immediate source of acquisition, such as donor of the collection or a bookseller etc. **IMPORTANT:** check with Archives staff before linking an Agent record as a Source (Donor, Bookseller etc.) in a Resource Record. This information will be published in the Resource record.
- **Subject:** Use this role when the materials being described are topically about the Agent.

The following are steps for linking Agent records as Creators in a Resource Record.

1. Click on the **Add Agent Link** button. Agent fields will appear.
2. **Role:** from the drop-down menu, select Creator, Source, or Subject.
3. Relator: If the Agent is a Creator, you can usually skip this field unless the Creator is a "Collector." (Example: Gordon Hall would be the Collector for the "Hall-Hoag Extremist Literature collection.") If the Creator is a Collector, select Collector from the drop-down menu.
4. Agents: first browse for an existing agent records. (If an agent record does not already exist, see Chapter 8 section 8.E. Create an Agent.)
  - a. Click the **down arrow**, select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Agents.
  - b. Locate and select the relevant Agent record.
5. Click on the **Save Resource** button.

## Subjects

In ArchivesSpace, Subjects are standalone records that can be linked to various objects such as Resource records, Accession records, and Digital Objects. Below are steps for linking Subjects in Resource records. For steps on creating Subject records, see Appendix section A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings.

Link a Subject to a Resource record.

1. In the Subjects module, click on the **Add Subject** button. **IMPORTANT:** Before linking a Subject to a Resource record, first browse to see if the subject record already exists in ArchivesSpace. (Follow steps a - d below). If a subject record does not already exist, see Chapter 8 section 8.D. Create a Subject.

- a. Start typing the Subject heading into the Subjects search box. A list of available subject headings will appear. Select a match from the list. If there's no match, search for a subject heading by clicking the down arrow and selecting Browse. A window will open with a list of Subjects.
- b. Enter the subject heading and/or keywords in the **filter by text** search box in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
- c. Select the relevant Subject record.
- d. Click on the **Link to Subject** button.

**TIP:** In ArchivesSpace, names are always represented as Agent records. If you want to add a name as a subject in a Resource record, first search for the name in the Agent records and then link the Agent record as a Subject.

## Scope and Content Note

The Scope and Content note discusses in narrative form the extent and depth of the collection – its strengths, weaknesses, and gaps. At a minimum, the Scope and Content note mentions: **types of materials**; **dates** (both Inclusive dates that indicate the beginning and end of the collection and Bulk dates that let the researcher know where most of the material is concentrated); **significant correspondents and subjects**. The best Scope and Content notes bring out what is hidden—what researchers would otherwise miss. Use the note to answer the question: *Why should I use this collection?* Mention the collection's research strengths or value. Consult [DACS 3.1 - 3.1.7](#).

**IMPORTANT:** For unprocessed Special Collections, mention that the collection is unprocessed in the Scope in Content note. Also note that the collection is unprocessed in the Processing Information note.

*Example: The Ma'yan records is an unprocessed collection of administrative files, workshop materials, program and exhibit files, and photographs relating to Ma'yan, a Jewish feminist organization based in New York.*

*Example: This collection consists of Pete Steffens's research and writings on the history of the modern Hebrew press, including typescripts and manuscript drafts of chapters, interviews with Israeli editors, such as Uri Avnery, research notes, notebooks, correspondence, and various publications and articles pertaining to the Jewish press. The collection contains material in both Hebrew and English and the bulk of it was created while Steffens was living in the Middle East from the 1950s to the early 1960s. The collection is unprocessed. A preliminary inventory is available in the department.*

1. Click **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Scope and Contents** from the Note drop-down menu.
3. In the Label Field, enter **Scope and Contents**.
4. Select **Scope and Contents** from the Type drop-down menu.

5. In the Content box, type a one-thousand-foot view description of the collection. Include its primary contents, date ranges, subject areas and special materials of note. Consult [DACS 3.1 – 3.2.4](#) for guidance on writing this note.

## Arrangement Note

Consult [DACS 3.2.-3.2.4](#).

1. Click the **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Arrangement** from the Note Type drop-down menu.
3. In the Label field, enter **Arrangement**.
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select **Arrangement**.
5. In the Content box, enter a summary of how the collection is arranged.
6. If you have Series Level descriptions:
  - a. Explain the series arrangement. *Example: Arranged in [spell out number] series: 1. [series name], [date ranges]; 2. [series name]. [date ranges]; 3. [series name], [date ranges]; etc.*
  - b. End with the statement: **For more information about each series, please consult the series descriptions in the box and folder listing.**
7. For Collection Level descriptions:
  - a. Indicate the organization of the materials, alphabetical, chronological, original order, etc.

## Conditions Governing Access

Used to provide information about access to the material. In this note, include information about restrictions, physical conditions affecting use (such as location, or condition of the materials) and/or technical requirements affecting use.

1. Click the Add Note button
2. Select Conditions Governing Access from the Note Type drop-down menu
3. In the Label field, enter: Conditions Governing Access
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select Conditions Governing Access
5. See Chapter 6 section [6.E. Finding Aid Notes](#) for what to include in this note.

## Conditions Governing Use

1. Click the Add Note button
2. Select Conditions Governing Use from the Note Type drop-down menu
3. In the Label field, enter: Conditions Governing Use
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select Conditions Governing Use
5. In the Content box, enter the following boilerplate:

- a. **Requests to reproduce or publish material from the collection should be directed to the Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.**
- b. In addition, give any information about restriction on reproductions due to copyright, preservation, donor agreements or for other reasons. Consult DACS 4.4-4.4.13.

## Source of Acquisition

**IMPORTANT:** Please consult with Archives staff to determine if this note should be published or unpublished.

1. Click the **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Immediate Source of Acquisition** from the Note Type drop-down menu.
3. In the Label field, enter Acquisitions Note.
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select **Immediate Source of Acquisition**.
5. In the Content box, enter the person or organization from which the material was acquired. Include the date of the acquisition. This information may come from the deed of gift form, transfer documents, or other files located in the control files. Consult Archives staff and DACS 5.2-5.2.5.

## Preferred Citation Note

1. Click the **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Preferred Citation** from the Note Type drop-down menu.
3. In the Label field, enter **Preferred Citation**.
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select **Preferred Citation**.
5. In the Content box, enter: [Name of the collection + dates], Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.
  - a. *Example: Franz Lehman letters and other material, 1943 - 1949, undated, Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections Department, Brandeis University.*

## Processing Information Note

1. Click the **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Processing Information** from the Note Type drop-down menu.
3. In the Label field, enter **Processing Information**.
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select **Processing Information**.
5. See Chapter 6 section 6.E. Finding Aid Notes for what to include in this note.



## Related Materials Note

Use this field to notify the user of related materials in other collections housed at Brandeis or other repositories. Consult [DACS 6.3.5](#).

1. Click the Add Note button
2. Select Related Material from the Note Type drop-down menu
3. In the Label field, enter Related Materials
4. From the Type drop-down menu, select Related Materials
5. In the Content box, provide the title and location of the related materials.

*Example: The professional papers of Louis Dembitz Brandeis are available on microfilm in the Goldfarb Library of Brandeis University. The original professional papers are at the University of Louisville. See also letters written by Louis Dembitz Brandeis in the Autograph Collection at Brandeis.*

## External Documents Note

Use this field to enter links to more information about the collection, including Special Collections Spotlights.

1. Click on **Add External Document** button.
2. In the Title field, enter the title of the source (*Example: Special Collections Spotlight*).
3. In the Location field, enter the URL of the source.

## Classifications

1. Click on the **Add Classification** button.
2. In the Classifications field, type **11 Special Collections**. The Special Collections classification record should autofill.
3. For University Archives, consult the Collections Archivist.

## Add Series, Subseries, Folders, and Instances

Once you've created the Collection Record (or the top level information), you can begin adding the different levels of description to your record (Series, Subseries, Folders and Boxes).

### Add Series

1. Select the Resource record from the tree navigation that appears at the top of the page.
2. Click on the **Add Child** button. The Archival Object page will appear.
3. **Title:** Enter the name of the Series. Capitalize the first letter of every word (except for **and, it, the, for**, etc.). *Example: Correspondence and Related Materials.*

4. **Component Unique Identifier:** Enter the Series identifier or number. (*Example: Series 1*)
5. **Level of Description:** Select **Series**.
6. **Dates:** Click the **Add Dates** button.
  - a. **Label:** From the drop-down menu, select **Creation**.
  - b. **Expression:** Enter the date or date range of the material. (*Example: 1918-2002*)
  - c. **Type:** select the type of date (**Inclusive**, **Single**, etc.) from the drop-down menu.
7. **Notes:** Enter the series description here.
  - a. Click on the **Add Notes** button.
  - b. **Note Type:** Select **Scope and Contents** from the drop-down menu.
  - c. **Text:** Enter the series description.
8. Click on **Save Archival Object** button.

## Add Subseries

1. Click on the Series or Box where the subseries belongs.
2. Click on the **Add Child** button. The Archival Object page will appear. Enter the following:
3. **Title:** Enter the name of the subseries. Capitalize the first letter of every word (except for **and**, **it**, **the**, **for**, etc.). (*Example: Writings by Nahum Goldman*)
4. **Component Unique Identifier:** Enter the subseries identifier or number. (*Example: Subseries 1*)
5. **Level of Description:** Select **Subseries**.
6. Click on **Save Archival Object**.

## Add Folders & Add Items

1. Click on the Series or Subseries where the folder or item belongs.
2. Click on the **Add Child** button. The Archival Object page will appear. Enter the following:
3. **Title:** enter the title of the folder/item.
4. **Component Unique Identifier:** Enter the folder/item identifier or number. (*Example: Folder 1, Item 1 etc.*)
5. **Level of Description:**
  - a. Select **File** for folders.
  - b. Select **Item** for items (such as audio recordings or objects).
6. **Dates:** Click the **Add Dates** button. **TIP:** Consult [DACS 2.4](#) for rules for formatting dates.
  - a. **Label:** From the drop-down menu, select **Creation**.
  - b. **Type:** Select **Inclusive** or **Single** from the drop-down menu.
    - i. **Inclusive Dates:** Use if the materials were created over a span of years.
      1. Enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields.
      2. **Expression:** Use for estimated dates. See **Tips** below.
    - ii. **Single Date:** Use if the materials were produced in a single year.
      1. Select **Single** date.
      2. Enter the date in the **Begin** field.
      3. **Expression:** Use this field for an estimated date. See **Tips** below.

**TIP #1:** Use the **Expression** text field to record estimated date ranges, materials lacking dates, and/or non-contiguous dates. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for guidance on estimated dates.

**TIP #2:** Use **circa** (not c. or ca) to indicate known approximate dates and educated guesses in the Expression text field. Consult [DACS 2.4.15](#) for additional guidance on estimated dates.

**TIP #3:** If the collection contains material lacking dates and an estimated date would be misleading, use **undated** (not n.d.). See [DACS 2.4.16](#).

7. **Add Container Instance:** Use this for entering the location of the folder (*Example: Box 2, Folder 1*). Click **Add Instance**. Enter the following:
  - a. Click on **Add Container Instance**.
  - b. From the Type drop-down menu: select **Mixed Materials**.
  - c. **Top Container:** Browse for your box. If one has not been created, select **Create Top Container** and a box will open. Enter the following:
    - i. In the Container Profile: Search and select the box type (*manuscript, half manuscript, record center, etc.*). If you cannot find a box profile that matches your box, check with the supervisor.
    - ii. **Container Type:** Select **Box**.
    - iii. **Indicator:** Enter the **Box number** (*Example 1, 2, or 3*).
    - iv. Click **Create** and **Link to Top Container**.

The **Create Top Container** box will close and a link to it will now appear in the Instance field. Fill out the following fields in the Instance:

- d. **Child Type:** select **Folder**.
- e. **Child Indicator:** enter the **Folder number**.
- f. Click on **Save Archival Object**.

## 8.D. Create a Subject

In ArchivesSpace, subjects are standalone records that can be linked to various objects such as Resource records, Accession records, and Digital Objects. **TIP:** In ArchivesSpace, names are always represented as Agent records. If you want to add a name as a subject in a Resource or Accession record, see Chapter 8 section [8.E. Create an Agent](#).

**IMPORTANT:** Before creating a Subject, first search or browse to see if it already exists in ArchivesSpace. If a subject record does not already exist, skip to Create a Subject record.

Search for a Subject record:

1. From the ArchivesSpace homepage, enter the Subject in the **Search All Records** box in the upper left-hand side of the page. Search results will appear with a list of facets such as Record Type, Creator, Subject on the left-hand side.
2. Limit your search results to Subject records by clicking on the **Subject facet**.

3. **To browse Subjects:** from the ArchivesSpace homepage, select **Browse**, then **Subjects**. The Subjects page will appear.
4. Use the **Filter by text** search box on the left, or click on the facets, to narrow your search results.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have to create a Subject record, search for an authorized heading the Library of Congress Subject Headings database via LC Linked Data Service. If you cannot locate an authorized LC subject heading, consult Archives staff.

Create a Subject record:

1. From the top of ArchivesSpace homepage, select **Create**, then **Subject**. A blank Subject record will appear.
2. **Authority ID:** Enter the Unique Identifier. For Library of Congress Subject Headings, this will be the URI listed at the top of the LC Subject Heading record. (*Example: <http://id.loc.gov/authorities/subjects/sh85147584> is the Authority ID for the subject heading Women in Judaism*).

**TIP:** If the Subject heading has subdivisions, enter the URI from the authority record where the main term and subdivisions appear together. If you can only find an authorized record for the main term, leave the Authority ID field blank. Consult Archives staff for additional information.

*Example: for the subject heading Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Judaism, Feminism is the main term, religious aspects and Judaism are the subdivisions. There is a LC Subject Heading record that includes all terms Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Judaism in a single record. The URI in this record is the Authority ID.*

*Example: for the subject heading Popular Literature -- United States, there is not a single authorized LC subject heading record that includes both the main term and subdivision. There are separate LC subject heading records (and URIs) for Popular Literature and United States. Leave the Authority ID field blank.*

3. **Source:** From the drop-down menu, select **Library of Congress Subject headings**.
4. **Term:** Enter the main term of the Subject heading.

**TIP:** The main term is the first term before any subdivision. (*Example: Feminism is the main term for the subject heading, Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Judaism. Religious aspects and Judaism are subdivisions.*)

5. **Type:** Select the appropriate type of heading from the drop-down menu.

**TIP:** Note that main terms will be either be **Topical** or **Geographical**. A subject heading's **Type** can be found in the authorized LC subject record.

6. If the Subject has subdivisions, click on the **Add Term/Subdivision** button to add additional subdivisions.

**TIP:** Each subdivision should be entered separately as terms with the appropriate Type selected. For example, for the subject heading *Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Judaism*, *Feminism* will be entered as the main term. The subdivisions *Religious aspects* and *Judaism* will also be entered separately as terms. If you have any questions about which type to select, consult Archives staff.

7. Click on **Save Subject** button.

Link a Subject record in a Resource or Accession record:

1. Go to the Resource record or Accession record where you want to add a link to the Subject record.
2. On the Resource or Accession record page, click **Edit**.
3. Scroll down to the **Subjects module**, click **Add Subject** button.
4. Locate the record by typing the subject into the search box. A list of available Subject records will appear. Select the record from the list. **TIP:** If the subject record doesn't appear, try browsing for it.
  - a. In the search box, click on the **down arrow** and select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Subjects.
  - b. Enter the subject heading and/or keywords in the **filter by text** search box in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
5. Select the relevant Subject record.
6. Click on the **Link to Subject** button.
7. Click the **Save Resource/Save Accession** button.

## 8.E. Create an Agent

Agent records in ArchivesSpace are used to represent names of persons, families, and corporate bodies. Agent records are standalone records that can be linked to various objects such as Resource records, Accession records, and Digital Objects, in different roles, including Creators, Sources (such as donors and booksellers), and Subjects.

**IMPORTANT:** Before creating a new Agent record, first search or browse to see if it already exists in ArchivesSpace.

**IMPORTANT:** If you have to create an Agent, check the [Library of Congress Name Authority File \(LCNAF\)](#) via LC Linked Data Service for an established or authorized name. If there is no record in LCNAF, follow rules in DACS. Consult [DACS 2.6](#), [DACS 9-9.4](#) and [DACS 10.1-10.4](#) for rules about creators and forming names for persons, families and corporate bodies.

Create an Agent:

1. From the top of the ArchivesSpace homepage, select **Create**, then **Agent** then select one of the following:
  - a. **Person** if the creator is an individual.
  - b. **Family** if the creator is an entire family (*Example: Spitzer Family*). Use Family if no first name is available.
  - c. Select **Corporate Entity** if the creator is an institution or organization.
2. **Dates of Existence:** Enter the creator's birth and death date, as they appear in the entity's LCNAF record. If the person does not have an LCNAF record, enter birth and/or death dates if known. Otherwise, skip this. Also skip if corporate bodies.
  - a. Click the **Add Date** button. The Dates of Existence fields will appear.
  - b. **Label:** Select **Existence**.
  - c. **Expression:** You can use this field if you have known approximate dates. Follow the rules for estimating date ranges in DACS 2.4.12. Note that in most cases, you will want to enter the dates as **Range** or **Single** under the Type drop-down menu below.
  - d. **Type:** From the drop-down menu, select **Range** (for Birth and Death dates) or **Single** (for Birth or Death date).
    - i. **Range:** Use **Range** if you have both a Birth and Death date.
      1. In the **Begin** box, enter the date of birth as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
      2. In the **End** box, enter the date of death as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
      3. **Certainty:** Leave blank for now.
      4. **Era:** select **ce**.
      5. **Calendar:** select **Gregorian**.
    - ii. **Single:** Use **Single** if you have one Birth or Death date.
      1. In the **Begin** box, enter the date of birth as YYYY, YYYY-MM or YYYY-MM-DD.
      2. **Certainty:** leave blank for now.
      3. **Era:** select **ce**.
      4. **Calendar:** select **Gregorian**.
3. **Authority ID:** Enter the **Unique Identifier** (usually a URI) from the database in which you found the established name of creator. In the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF) via LC Linked Data Service (highly recommended source) this will be a URI located at the top of the record. (*Example:*  
<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50001240> is the Authority ID for Lewis Feuer in LC Name Authority File)
4. **Source:** Enter the Source that your Authority ID came from. Leave this field blank if your name does not come from an authoritative source like LCNAF or is created by following DACS rules.
5. **Rules:** If you are creating the name using DACS, **select Describing Archives: A content Standard**. Otherwise, skip.
6. **Name Order:** select **Indirect**.
7. **Primary Part of Name:** Enter **last name**.

8. **Rest of Name:** Enter first name, middle/maiden names, or initials.
9. **Dates:** Enter known birth and death dates. The known birth and death dates should be the same as the ones listed in the Dates of Existence fields.
10. If your Agent record has a Biographical or Historical note, follow steps for adding this note below. Otherwise, Click **Link to Agent** button.

Additional fields that may be used in Agent records, but that are not required include:

1. **Suffix:** Use this field for a term that qualifies the name but is not a title. (*Example: Jr.*)
2. **Fuller form:** Use this field to enter first and middle names when they are abbreviated. (*Example: David Herbert for D.H. Lawrence*)
3. **Number:** Use this field for numbers that qualify a name, often roman numerals. (*Example II for John Paul II*)
4. **Qualifier:** Use this field for terms or dates that will distinguish in cases where Agent records have the same name. (*Example use Boston, Mass for Beth Israel Hospital (Boston, Mass.) or New York, N.Y. for Lilith (New York, N.Y.)*). If the person is a book dealer or seller, etc. you can enter this information in the Qualifier field.

**TIP:** Biographical or Historical notes should appear in Agent Records (as opposed to in the Finding Aid.) See more information about creating Biographical/Historical Notes below. Consult DACS 2.7.

1. Click **Add Note** button.
2. Select **Biographical / Historical** from the note drop-down menu.
3. In the Label Field enter **Biographical note** or **Historical note**.
4. Select **Biographical / Historical** from the Type drop-down menu.
5. In the Content box, enter brief and concise biographical information about the person, organization, or institution that created the material.

Link an Agent record:

Agent records are standalone records that can be linked to various objects such as Resource records, Accession records, and Digital Objects, in different roles, including Creators, Sources (such as donors and booksellers), and Subjects. Below are steps for linking an Agent record in an Accession record and a Resource record and as a Subject.

Linking an Agent in an Accession record:

**IMPORTANT:** in ArchivesSpace Accession records are always unpublished and cannot be viewed by the public. Agent records linked to or created from within an Accession records are usually unpublished by default. As a result, it's usually safe to link an Agent record that is a donor, bookseller or dealer (in the role of **Source**) to an Accession record.

1. Go to the Accession record where you want the Agent to appear.
2. Click on the Add **Agent Link** button. Agent fields will appear.

3. **Role:** From the drop-down menu, select **Creator**, **Source**, or **Subject**.
  - a. **Creator:** Use this role if the Agent was responsible for the creation, assembly, accumulation and/or maintenance and use of the materials being described.
  - b. **Source:** Use this role if the Agent was the donor, bookseller or dealer, etc.
  - c. **Subject:** Use this role if the materials being described are topically about the Agent. Skip in Accession records.
4. **Relator:** Used for collectors, donors, booksellers etc. Otherwise skip.
  - a. Use if the Creator is a **Collector**. (*Example: Gordon Hall would be the Collector for the Hall-Hoag Extremist Literature collection.*) If the creator is a collector, select **Collector**.
  - b. Use if the Source is a Donor, Bookseller, etc. Select the closest role from the drop-down menu.
5. **Agents:** Browse for the Agent record.
  - a. Click the **down arrow**, select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Agents.
  - b. Locate and select the relevant Agent record.
6. Click on the **Save Resource** button.

Linking an Agent in a Resource record:

See [Chapter 8.C. Create A Resource Record: Agent links](#)

Linking an Agent record as Subject in a Resource record:

In ArchivesSpace, names are always represented as Agent records. If you want to add a name as a Subject in a Resource record (finding aid) or Digital Object record, you should link the Agent record and then select Subject as its role.

1. Go to the Resource record where you want the name as subject to appear.
2. Click on the **Add Agent Link** button. Agent fields will appear. Note that there is an **Add Term/Subdivision** button at the bottom of the module.
3. **Role:** From the drop-down menu, select **Subject**.
4. **Relator:** Skip this field.
5. **Agents:** Browse for the Agent record.
  - a. Click the **down arrow**, select **Browse**. A window will open with a list of Agents.
  - b. Locate and select the relevant Agent record.
6. **Add Term/Subdivision:** (Optional) You can add specificity to the name by adding a term or subdivision. This is not required.
  - a. **Term:** Enter a term (*Example: correspondence, manuscripts, etc.*).
  - b. **Type:** From the drop-down menu, select the type that describes the term. (*Example: Topical, Geographic, Genre/Form, etc.*)
7. Click **Save Resource** button.



## 8.F. Create a Digital Object

In ArchiveSpace, digital object records are used to describe and record metadata about digital materials. ArchiveSpace does not store digital materials in its system. Instead, the digital materials will be hosted in another library system (most likely AlmaD) with a URL/URI to the digital materials added to the Digital Object record, usually in the File Versions section.

Digital Object records are standalone records that are created separately in ArchiveSpace and then linked to a Resource record or an Accession record. Go to the **Link a Digital Object** section below for more information about linking Digital Object records. Alternatively, you can create a Digital Object from within a Resource record and this will automatically link the two records.

**IMPORTANT:** Digital Object records can be single level records or multi-level records. Multi-level Digital Object records are created by adding a **Child** (Component record) to the **Parent** (Digital Object records). Links to digital materials can then be added within the Component record. Note that adding links in the Component record will result in users having to click multiple times to view the digital materials. Creating multi-level Digital Object records may provide other functionality and this capability should be explored further. At this time, adding links in the File Version section of the single level Digital Object record is recommended. See following instructions.

Create A Digital Object record:

A new Digital Object record can be created from the ArchiveSpace homepage or within a Resource record. Creating a Digital Object record from within the Resource record will automatically link it to the Resource record.

Create a Digital Object record from the ArchiveSpace homepage:

1. Go to Archives Space homepage.
2. From the main toolbar at the top of the page, select **Create**, then **Digital Object**. The **Digital Object** page will appear.

Create a Digital Object record from a Resource record:

1. Go the Resource record where you want to link the Digital Object record.
2. Click **Edit**.
3. Scroll down to the Instances section.
4. Click **Add Digital Object Record**. Digital Object search box will appear.
5. Click the **down arrow** located to the right of the Digital Object search box.
6. Select **Create**. A new Digital Object record will appear. Follow the steps below for filling in the required fields (Basic Information, File Version, Dates, etc.).

### Basic Information:

The top section of the Digital Object record is entitled “Basic Information.” Fill out the following required fields.

1. **Title:** Enter the title of the Digital Object. **TIP:** The title of the Digital Object will usually match the title of the folder/file/item to which it will be linked.
2. **Identifier:** Enter the **Object Identifier Number** for the digital object. Often times this will be the object’s file name. (*Example: DREY\_4.08.1\_p1 is the Object Identifier Number for the digital file DREY\_4.08.1\_p1.jpg*)
3. **Publish?:** Check this box.

### File Versions:

Use this section to add links to the digital materials and to record information about the digital file. Note that a Digital Object record can contain multiple File Version sections.

1. Click on the **Add File Version** button.
2. **File URI:** If the digital object is stored in another system such as the Brandeis IR or AlmaD, enter the URL or URI for the digital object here. This will create a link to that external system.
3. **XLink Actuate Attribute:** select **onRequest**.
4. **XLink Show Attribute:** select **New**.
5. **Caption:** Enter **Link to Digital Object** or **Digital Object**. In later versions of ArchivesSpace, this title will appear as the display title for the image thumbnail in the Digital Object record.
6. **File Format Name:** (Optional) From the drop-down menu, select name of the format for the file type. (*Example: JPEG Image*)
7. **File Size (Bytes):** (Optional) Enter the size of the digital file in bytes.
8. **Publish?:** Check this box.

### Dates:

Use this field to enter the date of creation for the original material and/or the date of digitization. Note that Digital Records can have more than one date. Consult [DACS 2.4](#) for rules for creating dates.

1. **Label:** From the drop-down list, choose **Creation** or **Digitized**.
2. **Type:** Select **Inclusive** or **Single** from the drop-down menu.
  - a. **Inclusive dates:** enter the dates in the **Begin** and **End** fields. (YYYY, YYYY-MM, or YYYY-MM-DD)
  - b. **Single date:** Enter the date in the **Begin** field only. (YYYY, YYYY-MM, or YYYY-MM-DD)

3. **Expression:** Use this text field for estimated dates or undated if an known approximate date cannot be given. **IMPORTANT:** Use **circa** (not c. or ca) for estimated dates.

Link a Digital Object:

Follow these steps to link the Digital Object record to a Resource or Accession record.

1. Go to the Resource record or Accession record where you want the Digital Object record to be linked. **IMPORTANT:** A Digital Object record can be linked at the Collection, Series, or File/Folder/Item level. Go to the appropriate level or go to the component where you want to add the link. Most likely this will be the File/Folder/Item level.
2. Click **Edit**.
3. Scroll down to the Instances section.
4. Click **Add Digital Object**. A Digital Object drop-down menu will appear.
5. Browse for the digital object. Begin entering the title of the digital object in the drop-down menu. A list of digital objects will appear.
6. Select the correct Digital Object title from the list.
7. Click **Save**.

## 8.G. Create a Location

*\*Instructions coming soon*

## 8.H. Create an Event

*\*Instructions coming soon*

### Sources:

This section of the manual borrows heavily from the ***ArchivesSpace Manual for Special Collections (v.1.5)*** by Kira A. Dietz at the University Libraries at Virginia Tech.

In addition, the following resources were used:

***Developing and Maintaining Practical Archives*** by Gregory S. Hunter; ***ArchivesSpace at Yale: User Manual***, Yale University; ***Archival Processing: ArchivesSpace***, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, Gainesville; ***ArchivesSpace Record Creation Walkthroughs***, University of Nebraska at Omaha; ***Smith Special Collections staff user documentation*** (on github), Smith College Libraries.

# Chapter 9. Restricting Materials

## 9.A. General Information

Archivists restrict materials for reasons related to privacy, confidentiality, and law. Ideally, materials which should be restricted are identified on acquisition, either by the donor or appraiser. However this is not always possible. Also, ideally, materials which cannot ever be shared publicly should not be present in our collections, again, this is not always reality. There exists a fair amount of material in our collections which we are professionally required to restrict, and those decisions are guided by our institutions, by our ethics, and by the law.

Restrictions work, with proper documentation and guidance, can be accomplished alongside other processing tasks. The following directions outline the process for three levels of restrictions review. The expectations and outcomes of these three methods are very different, so the choice for level of work and documentation on what work has been done is very important.

MPLP principles and our local practice advises that all unprocessed collections be presumed open for research unless there are pressing reasons for closure. Messiness alone should not be cause for denying access. However, making collections available with minimal to no processing may create problems in the areas of privacy and security.

Brandeis takes special care in ensuring the privacy of students. We also aim to be especially cognizant of the privacy needs of marginalized and/or at-risk community members. For more information protection of students in photographs see the ***University Photos with Students Use Policy***. Also, here is a useful website for gaining a general understanding of FERPA law.

## 9.B. Conducting a Restrictions Review

- Choose a restrictions review level which best suits the collection. Typically, the level of restrictions work corresponds closely to the level of processing that has been chosen. However, if the presence of restrictions indicates that more work is needed, you can revisit the overall processing level or consider processing particular sections in greater detail. To do so, report your findings to the supervisor so this can be re-evaluated. In this manual there are three levels of restrictions review: minimal, moderate, and maximum.
- Conduct a review of the materials by selecting one of the following levels and follow those directions.

### **Option 1: Conduct a minimal restrictions review**

This could also be called a collection level review, and corresponds to processing level 1. A minimal restrictions review is primarily done by deduction, not labor. A deductive review is one done through a series of considered questions based on the evidence available. The minimal restrictions process requires restrictions to be declared at the collection level (restrictions will not be identified at the item, folder, or series level). This review level is best suited to collections for which we know something about the contents and their creator. If we do not have a good understanding of the collection or their creator then a more thorough review level should be considered. The minimal review deduction is done in five steps:

1. Review documentation to determine any already documented restrictions.
  - a. Archivist restrictions statements or notes
    - i. These may be found in the accession spreadsheet, survey materials, or in other documents in the processing folder.
  - b. Donor-imposed restrictions:
    - i. For gifts after August 2020 a donor must specify restrictions in the Deed of Gift, otherwise the accessions received under the Deed can be presumed open.
    - ii. For gifts prior to August 2020 and for accessions not received under a Deed, search correspondence and notes created through the acquisition process.
2. Consider the likelihood of legal, confidential, and privacy concerns for the collection.
  - a. Review the screening criteria for the departmental unit you are working for. Choose from the Special Collection criteria or the University Archives criteria. It is also helpful to have a basic understanding of FERPA and HIPAA laws.
  - b. Consider likelihood that donor's activities would have resulted in production or retention of restricted materials. For example, would the records likely have a lot of documentation on students, and therefore be likely to have student grades (FERPA)? Based on the creator's occupation, would you expect there to be health records (HIPAA)?

Once the deduction work is complete:

3. Update the Processing Folder with your findings and discuss them with the supervisor
4. Create or update the Conditions Governing Access note for the whole collection
5. Update the restriction designation on the unit's master list

### **Option 2: Conduct a moderate restrictions review**

A moderate review corresponds to processing levels 2-3. It is a balance between deductive work and an examination of the material. This level requires that restrictions be declared at the box or series level (restrictions will not be identified to the item or

folder level). The goal is to create restriction designations for large groupings of material, often single or multiple boxes or series.

Level 2 - Box	Level 3 - Series
<p>Conduct brief review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the box. 2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review box for access on-demand.</p>	<p>Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the series or subseries. 2. Include Conditions Governing Access Note in finding aid and review series for access on-demand.</p>

Here are the eight steps of a moderate restriction review:

1. Review documentation to determine any already documented restrictions.
  - a. Archivist restrictions statements or notes
    - i. These may be found in the accession spreadsheet, survey materials, or in other documents in the processing folder.
  - b. Donor-imposed restrictions:
    - i. For gifts after August 2020 a donor must specify restrictions in the Deed of Gift, otherwise the accessions received under the Deed can be presumed open.
    - ii. For gifts prior to August 2020 and for accessions not received under a Deed, search correspondence and notes created through the acquisition process.
2. Consider the likelihood of legal, confidential, and privacy concerns for the collection.
  - a. Review the screening criteria for the departmental unit you are working for. Choose from the Special Collection criteria or the University Archives criteria. It is also helpful to have a basic understanding of FERPA and HIPAA laws.
  - b. Consider likelihood that donor's activities would have resulted in production or retention of restricted materials. For example, would the records likely have a lot of documentation on students, and therefore be likely to have student grades (FERPA)? Based on the creator's occupation, would you expect there to be health records (HIPAA)?

► Spot check the collection for restricted material using the criteria by glancing at folder titles within boxes or series for hints at confidential or sensitive information. For example, a folder title of **Hires and fires** or **Grievance** would likely have information which would be considered confidential by the University. Since restrictions are being declared at the box or

series/subseries level you will need to designate that entire box or series/subseries as restricted if there are restricted materials in them.

Once deduction and spot checking are complete:

3. Update the Processing Worksheet with your findings and discuss them with the supervisor.
4. Create or update the Conditions Governing Access statement for the collection.
5. Mark up the Processing Worksheet or finding aid to designate components as being restricted by adding [Restricted] at the end of the title. These should be added at the relevant level. For example, the following hierarchy has a restriction at a series level (Correspondence) and a subseries level [Family life]:

*Lawrence Jones Papers*  
*Correspondence [Restricted]*  
*Early Life*  
*Family life [Restricted]*  
*Education*  
*Publications*

6. Update the restriction designation on the unit's master list.
7. For the Special Collections unit, restricted materials must then be physically divided from other materials. The following are the moderate level processes for this work, and enables you to seclude materials within their own boxes:
  - a. Place entire restricted folder inside of an acid-free envelope that can be sealed.
  - b. Label the top of the acid free folder with the title of the folder, as it appears on the finding aid.
  - c. At the top of the folder also write [Restricted + "until" END DATE].
  - d. Place the folder back in the box exactly where it came from.

### **Option 3: Conduct a maximum restrictions review**

A full or maximum review incorporates deductive work and then proceeds to the steps needed to extensively evaluate the materials present. In addition to establishing a general access statement for the collection you will be documenting the details about smaller portions of the collections which have restrictions. You will also, when possible, indicate what date the restrictions can be lifted. This process is done in eleven steps.

Level 4 - Folder	Level 5 - Item
<p>Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the folder. 2. Separate or denote restricted folders to assist reference where possible.</p>	<p>Conduct a review at this level AND Refer to donor agreement, statements, or record type to alert to issues.</p> <p>1. Restrict by the item. 2. Separate or denote restricted items to assist reference.</p>

Here are the ten steps:

1. Review documentation to determine any already documented restrictions.
  - a. Archivist restrictions statements or notes
    - i. These may be found in the accession spreadsheet, survey materials, or in other documents in the processing folder.
  - b. Donor-imposed restrictions:
    - i. For gifts after August 2020 a donor must specify restrictions in the Deed of Gift, otherwise the accessions received under the Deed can be presumed open.
    - ii. For gifts prior to August 2020 and for accessions not received under a Deed, search correspondence and notes created through the acquisition process.
2. Consider the likelihood of legal, confidential, and privacy concerns for the collection
  - a. Review the screening criteria for the departmental unit you are working for. Choose from the Special Collection criteria or the University Archives criteria. It is also helpful to have a basic understanding of FERPA and HIPAA laws.
  - b. Consider likelihood that donor's activities would have resulted in production or retention of restricted materials. For example, would the records likely have a lot of documentation on students, and therefore be likely to have student grades (FERPA)? Based on the creator's occupation, would you expect there to be health records (HIPAA)?
3. Review the contents of the collection at the appropriate level using the criteria—in this case you will review at either the folder or item level. Both reviews are basically the same, as you would need to review the items in the folder to find out whether that folder is restricted. If there are restricted items, the whole folder will be designated as restricted.
4. Based on the screening criteria and in consultation with the supervisor, set an end date for all restrictions noted. Add this information to the Conditions Governing Access note in the Processing Worksheet and in the finding aid.



Once the deduction and extensive review work is complete:

5. Update the Processing Worksheet with your findings and discuss them with the supervisor.
6. Create or update the Conditions Governing Access note.
7. Mark up the Processing Worksheet or finding aid to designate components as restricted by adding [Restricted]. These should be added at the relevant level. For example, the following hierarchy has two restricted folders and they are declared at the folder level under the Correspondence series.

*Lawrence Jones Papers*

*Correspondence*

*Garner, Lisa M. [Restricted]*

*Jacobs, Mark L.*

*Jones, Patty R.*

*Lina, Matthew S. [Restricted]*

*Early Life*

*Family life*

*The Jones Homestead, Virginia*

*Genealogical tree*

*Education*

*K-12*

*College years*

8. Mark top of physical folders with [R] in pencil.
9. Update the restriction designation on the unit's master list.
10. For the Special Collections unit, restricted materials must then be physically divided from other materials. Choose one of the following processes for this work:
  - a. **Method for secluding materials within their own boxes:**
    - i. Place entire restricted folder inside of an acid-free envelope.
    - ii. Label the top of the acid free folder with the title of the folder, as it appears on the finding aid.
    - iii. At the top of the folder also write [Restricted + **until** END DATE].
    - iv. Place the folder back in the box exactly where it came from.

b. **Method for removing materials from their boxes:**

- i. Remove any item/folder that must be restricted to a new separate box/container (if you find an entire box of restrictions, then follow moderate directions for restricting the entire box)
- ii. Fill out a **Document Removed Form**. On the form include the following:
  1. Title/description of the item/folder
  2. Date
  3. Number of pages (Optional)
  4. Original location of the item or folder (collection name, box # and folder #)
  5. Restricted location of the item or folder (collection name, box #, and folder #. Example: Pauline Trigere papers, Box 2, Folder 3)
- iii. Make a copy of the filled-out Document Removed Form.
  1. File the Document Removed Form in the item/folder's original location.
  2. Keep the copy of the form with the item or folder being restricted. This will help future archivists refile the material when the restriction ends.
- iv. If you are restricting an item (such as a single file from a folder containing multiple files), place the restricted item/file in a separate acid free folder labeled with the name of the original folder plus [RESTRICTED + **until** END DATE]. If you are restricting an entire folder, add [Restricted + **until** END DATE] at the end of the folder label. In both cases, remember to include the restriction's end dates whenever possible. (Example: MIT Second Term 1953-1954 Grade Report, June 1954. [RESTRICTED **until** 2024]).
- v. Place the restricted folder in a box clearly labeled with the collection's title and RESTRICTED MATERIALS. In most cases the Restricted Materials box will be the last box in the collection. Example:  
*Pauline Trigere papers*  
**RESTRICTED MATERIALS**  
*Box 2*

## 9.C. Screening Criteria for Restricted Materials in Special Collections

(Please note that these criteria do not cover government documents)

Updated September 2018

Category	Item	Comment
<b>Student Records</b>	Report cards	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if SSN is recorded and person is still alive. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. If donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. (unless SSN is recorded and person is still alive.)
	Transcripts	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if SSN is recorded and person is still alive. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. If donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. (unless SSN is recorded and person is still alive.)
	Papers with grades or evaluations	If donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. If <i>NOT</i> donor or donor's family, mandatory restriction. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Tests with grades or evaluations	If donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. If <i>NOT</i> donor or donor's family: mandatory restriction. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Letters of recommendation	No restrictions necessary.
	Miscellaneous student records/materials	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if SSN is recorded and person is still alive. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. Restrictions may be necessary if material

Category	Item	Comment
		identifies 3rd party individuals and includes evaluation of any kind; the records need not be official institutional records governed by FERPA to warrant a privacy restriction.
<b>Refereed journal Records</b>	Refereed journal correspondence and writings	If donor's own work, no restriction. Discard if donor was the referee.*
<b>Refereed Grant Records</b>	Refereed grant proposals	If donor's own work, no restriction. Discard if donor was the referee.**
<b>Financial Material</b>	Salary information	If donor, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction. If unrelated 3rd party, leave open unless 3rd party contacts A&SC and requests that they be restricted. Do not draw specific attention to these materials if they relate to a 3rd party.
	Income tax records	Consider if worth keeping. These records often lack context and research value. If kept: if donor's records and donor is still alive, mandatory restriction because of SSN. Physically separate and restrict for 70 years from end date. If 3rd party, such as donor's child, mandatory restriction because of SSN (if person is still alive). Physically separate and restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Charitable giving history or potential.	If donor, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction. If unrelated 3rd party, leave open unless 3rd party contacts A&SC and requests that they be restricted. Do not draw specific attention to these materials if they relate to a 3rd party.
	Banking, investments, insurance	Always check for SSN and bank account numbers: mandatory restriction if SSN is recorded and person is still alive.

Category	Item	Comment
		Mandatory restriction if bank account numbers are recorded and current. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. If there is no SSN or bank account #s: if donor's materials, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction. If unrelated 3rd party, leave open unless 3rd party contacts A&SC and requests that they be restricted. Do not draw specific attention to these materials if they relate to a 3rd party.
<b>Medical/Health Related</b>	Medical bills	Consider if worth keeping. Scattered routine medical materials, especially hospital bills often lack research value. If kept, always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Health insurance correspondence	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. If the person is still alive, consider restrictions if there is something of an extremely sensitive nature.***
	Medical correspondence	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Physically separate the item and restrict for 70 years from end date. If the person is still alive, consider restrictions if there is something of an extremely sensitive nature.***
	Physician journals	If end date is more than 70 years old, then no restriction is necessary. If end date is less than 70 years and individual patients and ailments are identified,

Category	Item	Comment
		physically separate the material and restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Patient files	Physically separate and restrict for 70 years from end date.
<b>Legal materials****</b>	Court materials	Public records: no restriction necessary
	Legal case files	If donor's personal case files, no restriction necessary. If donor's family personal case files, consult donor for restrictions. If lawyer's case files, physically separate the materials and restrict for 70 years.
<b>Business materials</b>	Business administrative files	Restrict at donor's request only.*****
	Pay stubs	Consider if worth keeping. These materials may or may not have research value. If kept, always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if person alive and SSN is recorded. Physically separate and restrict from 70 years from end date. Otherwise, no restriction is necessary.
	Job applications	Consider if worth keeping. These materials may or may not have research value. If kept, always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Physically separate and restrict for 70 years from end date. Otherwise, no restriction necessary.

\*Scholarly and other journals typically do not make available the rejected author materials in order to protect the intellectual copyright of authors. Scholarly articles will arrive as part of an individual donor's collection. If the donor is an individual who reviewed articles for scholarly journals, the reviewed articles should not be in the collection. Scholarly journals typically request that reviewers return articles to the editor, or dispose of them in order to protect the intellectual copyright of authors: discard accordingly. Because the articles should not be in the collection in the first place, the research value is not relevant to the decision to keep or discard. Barring

specific circumstances noted in the control file, the only reason to keep an unpublished article in **personal papers** is if it was written by the donor of the collection.

**\*\***Like scholarly articles, grants will arrive as part of an individual donor's collection. If the donor is an individual who reviewed grants for a federal agency (such as National Endowment for the Humanities), there should not be any copies of grant proposals in the files. Federal guidelines mandate that grant reviewers dispose of grants immediately after a review has been filed with the agency, or after a designated amount of time, never more than a year: discard accordingly. Because the grant applications should not be in the collection in the first place, the research value is not relevant to the decision to keep or discard.

If the donor is an individual who reviewed grants for a private foundation, assume a similar set of guidelines and discard the grant applications. Even though we don't know whether or not the donor was obligated to discard the grants at the time of review, we can safely discard them on the precedent of federal agency policy and lack of research value: while the grant proposals may be interesting, they do not carry much research value if the context in which they were created or the outcome of the funding process is unknown. Barring specific circumstances noted in the control file, the only reason to keep an unpublished article or grant proposal in **personal papers** is if it was written by the donor.

**\*\*\*** Some medical conditions that bear consideration as extremely sensitive could include serious mental or reproductive health or substance abuse conditions. When in doubt consult with a A&SC archivist or staff member.

If the subject of the sensitive material is deceased, concerns for privacy diminish as it is widely accepted that privacy ends with death. If there is extremely sensitive material about a living donor or 3rd party in the collection, the processing archivist only should contact the donor/person who signed the Deed of Gift form to discuss restrictions. If the donor is deceased and the collection contains extremely sensitive material relating to a living 3rd party, the processing archivist might contact an heir of the donor to discuss a restriction. Whether or not a restriction is put in place by the donor or an heir at the time of processing, A&SC is open to the possibility that a 3rd party represented in the collection may at any time request a restriction on materials relating to them.

**\*\*\*\*** Legal materials such as court materials are public documents and therefore always available without restriction. Legal case files (including correspondence, notes and other materials) relating to a donor's law practice are a different matter.

Making case files available for research is a question of risk management. Lawyers are legally and ethically bound to uphold attorney-client privilege and a reasonable archivist might question whether a lawyer can legally or ethically place case files in an archive. Since archivists are not subject to the same codes that lawyers are legally bound to uphold, it is not the archivist's responsibility to determine whether or not a lawyer can legally and/or ethically place their case files in A&SC.

Nevertheless, the director or archivist acquiring the collection will want to consult with the donor and/or university counsel about legal and ethical considerations (keeping in mind that these vary by state) before accepting a collection with case files. A thorough risk assessment should be done before accepting and providing access to the material.

Once the materials are accessioned the usual ethical responsibilities of archivists come into play. In keeping with the special concern for the privacy of 3rd parties who inadvertently end up in the collection, case files of a donor who is a lawyer or law firm should be closed for a period of 70 years from the end date of the materials involved.

\*\*\*\*\*Donors of business records sometimes restrict current administrative materials as a matter of course. Be sure to check control file for gift agreement.

**Sources:**

***PACSCL Hidden Collections Processing Project: Surveying and Minimal Processing Manual***, March 2012, pages 53-54.

Sensitive Materials Processing Guidelines, from ***A Processing Manual for the Special Collections Technical Services Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill***, September 2009



## 9.D. Screening Criteria for Restricted Materials in University Archives

(Please note that these criteria do not cover government documents)

Last updated: 5/11/20

Category	Item	Comment
<b>Student Records</b>	Transcripts	Brandeis transcripts are restricted, and should not be located in University Archives collections. If found, please report them to the University Archivist.
	Tests and papers with grades or evaluations	If in reference to donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. If <i>NOT</i> donor or donor's family: mandatory restriction for 75 years.
	Letters of recommendation	Recommendations by a Brandeis faculty member or about a Brandeis student are restricted for 75 years.
	Class rosters and lists, directories, graduation lists	Graduation lists may be viewed in person. Restrict all other uses for 75 years. Rosters should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Miscellaneous student records/materials	If in reference to donor or donor's family: no restriction necessary. Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction if SSN is recorded and person is still alive. Mandatory restriction for citizenship or physical or mental health status. Restrict material that identifies 3rd party individuals and includes evaluation of any kind; the records need not be official institutional records governed by FERPA to warrant a privacy restriction of 75 years.

Category	Item	Comment
	Yearbooks and student directories	Yearbooks may be viewed in person. Individual photos may be scanned for research or personal use. Student directories may not be viewed by anyone unless they can confirm they are Brandeis alumni. Neither may be copied in part or whole (with the exception of individual yearbook photos) for 75 years after publishing date.
	Student organizations and activities records	All materials available for viewing. Records or other materials which identify particular students who are not already publicly affiliated in connection with controversial or personal subject matter cannot be copied or disseminated for 40 years. See definitions in <b><i>University Photos with Students Use Policy</i></b> .
	Photographs	All photos are available to be viewed in the reading room. See <b><i>University Photos With Students Use Policy</i></b> regarding copying and use for more information.
<b>Refereed Journal Records</b>	Refereed journal correspondence and writings	If donor's own work, no restriction. If donor was the referee, notify collections manager, as this should be discarded.*
<b>Refereed Grant Records</b>	Refereed grant proposals	If donor's own work, no restriction. If donor was the referee, notify collections manager, as this should be discarded.**
<b>Financial Materials</b>	Salary information	Brandeis salaries are restricted for 70 years. If donor, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction.
	Income tax records	If person is still alive, mandatory restriction because of SSN, 70 years. Should be considered for deaccessions as these records often lack context and research value.

Category	Item	Comment
	Charitable giving history or potential.	If 3rd party donations to Brandeis, restrict for 70 years unless the information has already been publicized. If in reference to donor, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction.
	Banking, investments, insurance	Mandatory restriction of 70 years if SSN is recorded and person is still alive. If donor, and no SSN then no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction. If unrelated 3rd party, leave open unless 3rd party contacts A&SC and requests that they be restricted. Do not draw specific attention to these materials if they relate to a 3rd party. Should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Miscellaneous financial records	Restrict for 70 years if there is a credit card or account number.
<b>Medical or Health Related</b>	Medical bills	Check for SSN: mandatory restriction of 70 years if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Medical and health insurance correspondence	Always check for SSN: mandatory restriction of 70 years if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. If the person is still alive, consider restricting if there is something sensitive in nature.*** Should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Physician journals	If end date is more than 70 years old, then no restriction is necessary. If end date is less than 70 years and individual patients and ailments identified, restrict for 70 years from end date.
	Patient files	If in reference to the donor, do not restrict. If not, then restrict for 70 years from end date.

Category	Item	Comment
<b>Legal Materials****</b>	Court materials	For public records no restriction necessary
	Legal case files	If Brandeis business, consult General Counsel. If donor's personal case files, no restriction necessary. If donor's family personal case files, consult donor for restrictions. If lawyer's case files restrict for 70 years
<b>Business Materials</b>	Business administrative files	For Brandeis administrative files see <b>University Archives Access Policy</b> . For example, documents marked <b>Confidential</b> or <b>For Eyes Only</b> and internal minutes should be restricted. If not Brandeis, restrict at donor's request only. *****
	Meeting minutes	If Brandeis, determine if minutes were internal or public, and whether they are detailed or summarized. Internal minutes are restricted for a minimum of 50 years. For specific minute types see <b>University Archives Access Policy</b> .
	Pay stubs	Check for SSN: mandatory restriction for 70 years. Otherwise, no restriction is necessary. Should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Job applications	If Brandeis application, restrict for 70 years after date of creation. For non-Brandeis a mandatory restriction of 70 years if person is still alive and SSN is recorded. Otherwise, no restriction necessary. Should be considered for deaccession as these records often lack context and research value.
	Employee reviews and recommendations	If in reference to non-donor Brandeis faculty or staff restrict for 70 years. If in reference to donor, no restriction necessary. If donor's family, consult donor about restriction.
	Resumes and CVs	If Brandeis faculty do not restrict unless it has SSN. Otherwise, restrict for 70 years.

Category	Item	Comment
	Addresses, personal contact information	If Brandeis community member restrict for 70 years

\*Scholarly and other journals typically do not make available the rejected author materials in order to protect the intellectual copyright of authors. Scholarly articles will arrive as part of an individual donor's collection. If the donor is an individual who reviewed articles for scholarly journals, the reviewed articles should not be in the collection. Scholarly journals typically request that reviewers return articles to the editor, or dispose of them in order to protect the intellectual copyright of authors: discard accordingly. Because the articles should not be in the collection in the first place, the research value is not relevant to the decision to keep or discard. Barring specific circumstances noted in the control file, the only reason to keep an unpublished article in **personal papers** is if it was written by the donor of the collection.

\*\*Like scholarly articles, grants will arrive as part of an individual donor's collection. If the donor is an individual who reviewed grants for a federal agency (such as the National Endowment for the Humanities), there should not be any copies of grant proposals in the files. Federal guidelines mandate that grant reviewers dispose of grants immediately after a review has been filed with the agency, or after a designated amount of time, never more than a year: discard accordingly. Because the grant applications should not be in the collection in the first place, the research value is not relevant to the decision to keep or discard.

If the donor is an individual who reviewed grants for a private foundation, assume a similar set of guidelines and discard the grant applications. Even though we don't know whether or not the donor was obligated to discard the grants at the time of review, we can safely discard them on the precedent of federal agency policy and lack of research value: while the grant proposals may be interesting, they do not carry much research value if the context in which they were created or the outcome of the funding process is unknown. Barring specific circumstances noted in the control file, the only reason to keep an unpublished article or grant proposal in **personal papers** is if it was written by the donor.

\*\*\*Some medical conditions that bear consideration as sensitive include reproductive health and sexuality, substance abuse, disability status, and mental illness. When in doubt consult with an A&SC archivist or staff member.

If the subject of the sensitive material is deceased, concerns for privacy diminish as it is widely accepted that privacy ends with death. If there is extremely sensitive material about a living donor or 3rd party in the collection, the processing archivist only should contact the donor/person who signed the Deed of Gift form to discuss restrictions. If the donor is deceased and the collection contains extremely sensitive material relating to a living 3rd party, the processing archivist might contact an heir of the donor to discuss a restriction. Whether or not a

restriction is put in place by the donor or an heir at the time of processing, A&SC is open to the possibility that a 3rd party represented in the collection may at any time request a restriction on materials relating to them.

\*\*\*\* Legal materials such as court materials are public documents and therefore always available without restriction. Legal case files (including correspondence, notes and other materials) relating to a donor's law practice are a different matter.

Making case files available for research is a question of risk management. Lawyers are legally and ethically bound to uphold attorney-client privilege and a reasonable archivist might question whether a lawyer can legally or ethically place case files in an archive. Since archivists are not subject to the same codes that lawyers are legally bound to uphold, it is not the archivist's responsibility to determine whether or not a lawyer can legally and /or ethically place their case files in A&SC.

Nevertheless, the director or archivist acquiring the collection will want to consult with the donor and/or university counsel about legal and ethical considerations (keeping in mind that these vary by state) before accepting a collection with case files. A thorough risk assessment should be done before accepting and providing access to the material.

Once the materials are accessioned the usual ethical responsibilities of archivists come into play. In keeping with the special concern for the privacy of 3rd parties who inadvertently end up in the collection, case files of a donor who is a lawyer or law firm should be closed for a period of 70 years from the end date of the materials involved.

\*\*\*\*\*Donors of business records sometimes restrict current administrative materials as a matter of course. Be sure to check control file for gift agreement.

#### **Sources:**

***PACSCCL Hidden Collections Processing Project: Surveying and Minimal Processing Manual***, March 2012, pages 53-54.

Sensitive Materials Processing Guidelines, from ***A Processing Manual for the Special Collections Technical Services Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill***, September 2009

# Appendices

## A.1. The Processing Worksheet

The Processing Worksheet is designed to be used in tandem with all steps of the manual, and provides space to record all information being gathered during the processing of a collection. Below is a screenshot of the Processing Worksheet, a copy of which will be provided to you for your work. Notice the tabs at the bottom, which divide the Worksheet into the following categories:

1. Accession Record
2. Survey & Processing Plan
3. Appraisal & Arrangement
4. Preservation and Physical Processing
5. Collection Description
6. Collection Inventory
7. ArchivesSpace Upload
8. Manager's Checklist

Survey & Processing Plan		
<b>MINIMAL-LEVEL SURVEY &amp; PLANNING</b> (Processing Level 1)		<b>FULL-LEVEL SURVEY &amp; PLANNING</b> (Processing Levels 2-5)
<b>Document Review Notes</b>		<b>Document Review Notes</b>
<b>Deed of gift:</b>		<b>Deed of gift:</b>
Who or what does the collection document?		Who or what does the collection document?
Who donated the collection?		Is there a summary of the contents of the collection?
Has anyone identified any restricted materials?		Who donated the collection?
<b>Donor/Transfer correspondence:</b>		Has anyone identified any restricted materials?
Are they organizational records or personal papers?		Are the copyright holder(s) identified?
Who were the creator(s) of the collection and its materials? <i>[For University records name the department and any major creators of materials in the collection]</i>		<b>Donor/Transfer correspondence:</b>
Was the collection created or compiled? <i>[University records answer is always "created"]</i>		Are they organizational records or personal papers?
When were the materials created [or for compiled collections, when was it compiled by the donor]?		Who were the creator(s) of the collection and its materials? <i>[For University records name the department and any major creators of materials in the collection]</i>
Is there a summary of the contents of the collection?		Was the collection created or compiled? <i>[University records answer is always "created"]</i>
Is there any mention of confidential or restricted materials?		When were the materials created [or for compiled collections, when was it compiled by the donor]?
<b>Collection Inventory:</b>		When and why was the collection donated to your repository?

+

Accession Record

Survey & Processing Plan

Appraisal & Arrangement

Preservation and Physical Processing

### Processing Worksheet tips:

Not every tab will be utilized by every processor. This will depend on which chapters of the manual you are assigned to complete.

- Some tabs have split question and answer sections so as to provide an appropriate space to record information at different levels of processing. For example, the Survey & Processing Plan section is divided in two, with the left-

hand column for use during Minimal Processing and the right-hand column for Full Level Processing.

- Some processors will be recording their inventory in the Collection Inventory tab of the Processing Worksheet, whereas others will use the ArchivesSpace upload Template tab. The use of these tabs for your data will be determined by the supervisor.

## A.2. Measurements for Archival Storage

Measurements help reference staff and researchers know how much material exists in a collection and also helps with storage space planning. While containers could be measured in different ways, the local rule is to measure the amount of space needed to shelve the item.

### Standard archival boxes

Record center box = 1 linear foot



Manuscript box = .5 linear feet



Manuscript box half-size = .3 linear feet





## Non-standard archival boxes

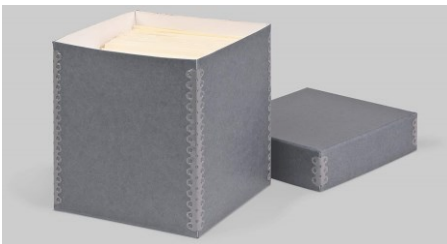
Long flat boxes= measure longest edge and express in linear feet



Rectangular boxes= Measure longest edge and express in linear feet



Square boxes= measure one edge and express in linear feet



## Loose folders

Oversize map folders = count as 1 linear foot, as they will be stacked. If you have multiples, increase by one linear foot for every 10 items.

## Non-archival boxes

For non-traditional boxes that have no known shelving size, especially those being sent to offsite storage, try using [Yale University's Linear Footage Calculator](#). While they use different measurements than we do for standard boxes, this is still a great resource when you are not sure how to measure non-standard boxes. The Tennessee State Library and Archives also has a useful [space planning guide](#) if further consultation is needed.

## A.3. Common Preservation Concerns

Preservation steps are considered at all processing levels, but to varying degrees. Sometimes, the degree to which the collection requires preservation work can determine the level to which it should be processed. If you are currently processing a collection at level 1, 2, or 3 and it turns out to have such serious preservation issues as to require intervention at the folder or item level, then the processing level should be re-evaluated by you and the supervisor.

### Immediate Threats and Access Issues

This category of concerns should always be addressed for all processing jobs no matter the level. It addresses immediate threats to the collection itself, to other materials in storage, and potentially, to human health.

► Conduct an immediate threat scan:

1. Is there any evidence of water damage, mold, insects or animals? Check for discolorations on materials, bugs dead or alive, or animal sign on the outside and inside the boxes. Remember that the visual appearance of mold can vary.
2. Are the boxes/enclosures sturdy enough to handle their own weight? Are all sides secure enough to hold materials properly and is there a serviceable lid on the box?
3. If film-based media are present, note either the presence of film which may be older than the 1950s (it could be nitrate film) or the smell of vinegar (this indicates deterioration).
4. Is there anything exceptionally fragile or breakable or at risk for damage in its current enclosure which could damage nearby items?
5. Are there any items which could be dangerous to handle, such as broken glass, rusty nails, arsenic, etc.? (Note: Arsenic can be found in items such as old taxidermy, natural history specimens, other objects made from feathers or fur, and some historic paint pigments.)

► Conduct an immediate access issues scan:

1. Can the box be picked up and moved around by reference staff and patrons without risk or damage?
2. Are the materials piled atop one another, or can a user remove items one at a time and then return each folder one at a time?
3. Are there many loose papers which have not arrived in folders?

► Conduct immediate access remedies:

1. If the box cannot sustain use, rebox the materials into archival acid-free containers in good condition. Try to match the size so that the same materials can fit into a single box.

If materials must be split, however, label them to indicate this (if it was originally box 7 you can create a box 7A and 7B).

2. If materials are piled from the bottom up, try to orient them vertically so that individual folders, binders, and publications can be removed and returned one at a time.
3. If there are loose papers, gather them into unlabeled folders. If there are lots of them, you can split them into several folders, but keep their order.

► Record all preservation actions taken in the Processing Worksheet for either Minimal or Full Level Processing.

## General Preservation Concerns

This category of concern should be addressed during full processing levels, especially levels 3, 4, and 5 after completing the steps above. For these levels, note any of the following:

- Acidic enclosures- boxes and folders which are turning yellow or brown and are fragile.
- Metal fasteners and binders- these are especially a concern if they are rusty.
- Rubber bands- the old ones stick to paper and become crumbly.
- Acidic or aging paper- materials themselves can be acidic, especially newsprint. Look for yellowing or browning and text which is becoming impossible to read.
- Photographic materials- these can be prints, negatives, or objects such as glass or metal.
- Film and audio media- reels of various types and sizes.
- Old storage media- hard and soft discs, external hard drives, zip drives, CDs and DVDs.
- Oversize maps, drawings, posters.
- Folded and rolled paper.
- Adhesive items- extensive post-its, taped materials.
- Books with special, old, or fragile bindings.

► Bring these notes to the attention of the supervisor for a decision as to what kinds of preservation work should be conducted. Refer to the Processing Matrix to assist in this decision.

► If you have not received any training on specific preservation tasks you will undertake, you will now receive some training on them.

► Many preservation jobs in this category are described in the Preservation Manual. Please request access and refer to the appropriate chapter of that manual while working on these tasks.

► Record all preservation actions taken in the Processing Worksheet for either Minimum or Full Level Processing.

## A.4. Levels of Processing: Decision-Making Chart

Choosing a processing level is done in consultation with the supervisor, and the collection attributes upon which this decision is made are illustrated in the chart below.

**Hint:** Not all attributes must be met to decide on a processing level for a collection. In most cases one particular attribute will be the deciding factor over others.

Level of Processing	Condition / State of Collection upon Receipt	Value Attributes of Collection upon Receipt	Resource Attributes of Collection upon Receipt
Minimal  <b>Level 1</b> Collection Level	<p>Few preservation issues.</p> <p>Collections with simple existing organizational schemes, and/or are small enough for users to review easily, around 2 linear feet or less.</p> <p>There is existing quality description on key individuals, organizations, and topics to use in finding aid notes, or, these descriptions can be created without an in-depth survey. This will provide good keyword searchability.</p> <p>Few access or privacy concerns.</p> <p>Requires few deaccessions, or research accessibility will not suffer from lack of deaccessioning.</p>	<p>Collections with low research value or little expected use.</p> <p>Quality of Documentation - Collection is duplicative of holdings at peer institutions.</p> <p>Object value - Collection contains materials of low cultural/historical value. Description at the minimum level will provide enough information for value assessment. Materials are unlikely to be exhibited, and have no particular need for security tracking.</p> <p>Collection peripherally relates to Brandeis University's collecting mission and/or has some relevance to institutional memory.</p>	<p>Labor - Most likely to be performed by Collection Managers or students with limited project durations.</p> <p>Collection is part of the backlog and not on the priority list.</p> <p>Little or no funding available to support processing.</p>

Level of Processing	Condition / State of Collection upon Receipt	Value Attributes of Collection upon Receipt	Resource Attributes of Collection upon Receipt
<p>Low</p> <p><b>Level 2</b> Box Level</p>	<p>Few preservation issues.</p> <p>Collections which arrive in a useful arrangement, or that are lacking discernible order for which a rough sort into boxes facilitates their use.</p> <p>May be suitable for collections of varying sizes, most often used for collections of records.</p> <p>There is existing quality description on key individuals, organizations, and topics to use in finding aid notes, or, these descriptions can be created without an in-depth survey. This will provide good keyword searchability. OR Collections have homogenous subject matter not requiring rich description.</p> <p>Few access or privacy concerns.</p> <p>Requires few deaccessions, or research accessibility will not suffer from lack of deaccessioning.</p>	<p>Collections with low to moderate research value or expected use.</p> <p>Collection is duplicative of holdings at peer institutions.</p> <p>Collection contains materials of low cultural/historical value. Description at the box level will provide enough information for value assessment. Materials are unlikely to be exhibited, and have no particular need for security tracking.</p> <p>Collection peripherally relates to Brandeis University's collecting mission and/or has some relevance to institutional memory.</p>	<p>Most likely to be performed by Collection Managers or students with limited project durations.</p> <p>Collection is part of the backlog and not on the priority list.</p> <p>Little or no funding available to support processing.</p>
<p>Moderate</p> <p><b>Level 3</b> Series / Subseries Level</p>	<p>Few to moderate preservation issues.</p> <p><u>Original order</u> and housing are adequate and require little rearranging.</p> <p>May be suitable for collections of varying sizes.</p> <p>Collection can be grouped and described topically, and for which a succinct series-level scope and content note in place of a folder list will offer adequate topical description for discovery.</p> <p>Few to moderate access or privacy concerns.</p> <p>Requires little to moderate weeding for deaccessions.</p>	<p>Collections with moderate research value and expected use.</p> <p>Collection adds some value to existing research and scholarship.</p> <p>Collection contains materials that are of moderate historical/cultural value. Description at the series/subseries level will provide enough information for value assessment. Materials have no particular need for security tracking.</p> <p>Collection may be requested by Brandeis stakeholders, and has some relevance to the University's institutional memory.</p>	<p>May be processed by various staff members, most likely for student projects or professional staff with limited project time.</p> <p>Collection is low or middling on the priority list.</p> <p>Little or no funding available to support processing.</p>

Level of Processing	Condition / State of Collection upon Receipt	Value Attributes of Collection upon Receipt	Resource Attributes of Collection upon Receipt
<p>Intensive</p> <p><b>Level 4</b> File/Folder Level</p>	<p>Materials would benefit from intervention for preservation issues.</p> <p>Collection arrives in no discernible order and/or poor housing.</p> <p>Collections of varying size, but with complex/varied subject matter.</p> <p>Collection contents require folder-level description to provide keyword searching at the folder level.</p> <p>Collections with privacy issues which are scattered throughout.</p> <p>May require extensive weeding for deaccessions.</p>	<p>Collections with high research value and expected use.</p> <p>Collection adds significant value to existing research and scholarship.</p> <p>Collection contains materials that are of moderate to high historical/cultural value.</p> <p>Description at the folder level will provide enough information for value assessment and/or exhibition, as well as enables some level of security tracking.</p> <p>Collection may be requested by Brandeis stakeholders, and has particular relevance to the University's institutional memory.</p>	<p>Collection will be processed by a professional processor or a highly supervised and/or experienced student.</p> <p>Collection is high on the priority list.</p> <p>Required through donor agreement and/or funding provided to support processing.</p>
<p>Highly Intensive</p> <p><b>Level 5</b> Item Level</p>	<p>Materials would benefit from intervention for preservation issues.</p> <p>Collection arrives in no discernible order and/or poor housing.</p> <p>Applicable to collections of various sizes.</p> <p>Collection contents are unique and would benefit highly from description to provide keyword searching at the item level.</p> <p>Collection contains files and/or items with specific access or privacy issues that require individual restrictions</p> <p>Requires extensive weeding for deaccessions.</p> <p><i>***This level is rarely appropriate -- reserved for collections of unusual rarity or value.</i></p>	<p>Collections with high research value and expected use.</p> <p>Collection adds exceptional value to existing research and scholarship.</p> <p>Collection contains materials that are unique and valuable, and item level description would benefit exhibition and/or is needed for security tracking.</p> <p>Collection has been specifically requested by donors or other Brandeis stakeholders, and/or has particular relevance to the University's institutional memory.</p>	<p>Collection will be processed by a professional processor, likely due to donation requirements.</p> <p>Collection is high on the priority list.</p> <p>Required through donor agreement and/or extensive funding provided to support processing.</p>

## A.5. MPLP For Addenda

This chart will help the processor and the supervisor decide how much integration an addendum should have into the existing collection. Integrating materials is a very time-consuming process, so it is important to decide which level should be used, favoring as much efficiency as possible without sacrificing usability of the collection.

Level	Arrangement	Description
Low	Keep accessions distinct; do not integrate or interfile one addendum into another or into the previously processed materials. Place new materials as they arrived in boxes at the end of a processed collection.	<p>If there is already a Scope and Content note, add a brief description of the addendum to this note. If there is already some hierarchical description for previous materials (such as a box, series, or folder list) add the addendum to the hierarchy at the end as a generic series or box name. For example, <b>Stephen Whitfield Papers February 2020 addendum, [date range of materials, if known]</b>.</p> <p><i>Extra option:</i> create a Series note describing the collection further or create a series or box list under the generic series or box title.</p>
Moderate	<p>Keep accessions distinct; do not integrate or interfile addenda into one another or into the previously processed materials. Place new materials in boxes at the end of a processed collection.</p> <p><i>Extra option:</i> physically rearrange materials within the addendum (while keeping it separate from previous materials) into series/subseries and/or folders.</p>	<p>Describe the materials in the addendum to the series, subseries, or folder level as appropriate. Sequential series/subseries/folders in the finding aid will be in different boxes (unless you have opted to physically rearrange the materials). Update Scope and Content and/or Series note as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Extra option:</i> bring addendum series together with similar series in the previously processed material.</p>
Intensive	Physically integrate some or all of the addendum materials with previously processed materials.	Intellectually integrate series, subseries, or folder descriptions of the addendum into the previously processed material. You can apply

Level	Arrangement	Description
	<u>MPLP option</u> : limit the moving of lots of individual items if possible. This can be done by moving groups of series, subseries, or folders, or by not requiring box numbers to line up numerically.	folder or file level description if appropriate. Update Scope and Content and/or Series notes as appropriate.

Note: This chart is largely based on the ***Managing Additional Accessions to a Previously Processed Collection*** chart by the University of California Libraries.

## A.6. MPLP for University Archives

The following are some recommendations from University of California Libraries on the efficient processing of archives which document the college or university.

Collections of paper-based records which are modern, subject to record schedules, maintained with some sort of filing system, and not intensively used are good candidates for MPLP practices. However, collections with frequent accruals pose challenges, as does our obligation as university employees to protect sensitive materials (particularly student records) and to provide timely access to public records.

A few additional strategies are relevant:

1. Limit the scope of record groups, or increase the granularity of how you manage archival collections (Example: use series, accessions, record units, etc. as the primary means of managing a collection in the University Archives instead). This will reduce the frequency with which you need to update existing finding aids and catalog records with new accessions. Some examples:
  - a. Manage materials for each major figure in an office separately. For example, for the Chancellor's records, maintain separate collections for each Chancellor, rather than one big record group for all Chancellors.
  - b. Manage materials from each office, regardless of their division, separately. For example, if you receive records from multiple units with a division of student affairs, don't group them all together in one record group for student affairs. Manage their records separately.
  - c. Manage distinct series from the same office separately when appropriate. For example, University of California (System). Office of the President. Records: Permanent Files, 1952-1975; or University of California, Irvine, Office of the Vice Chancellor, Student Affairs Budget Records.
  - d. Don't be wedded to managing records based on the campus structure. For example, if you receive materials from a committee, individual, or a special topic



of interest, manage the material at the level of granularity in which it arrived, rather than trying to integrate it into an existing collection or structure. For example: Smith (Donovan) Files Relating to Space Utilization at the University of California at Berkeley, or Ariel (Joan) Files on Women's Studies at the University of California, Irvine.

2. Refer to state, university, and campus policies about restricted classes of records. Each campus maintains these policies and procedures.
  - a. Shift some responsibility for appraisal, arrangement, preservation, and description to campus offices.
  - b. Develop policies and procedures to guide transfers of records that limit the work the University Archives must complete to make these records available.
  - c. Require that campus units follow the university record schedules. Get the campus record manager involved. Train staff in campus units to recognize archival records. Do not allow transfer of restricted or non-permanent records. Return restricted or nonpermanent records to office of origin for disposal and/or weeding.
  - d. Require that campus units provide electronic inventories of materials they transfer. Create a template so you may easily repurpose this inventory for a finding aid.
  - e. Give campus units archival boxes to pack records, and train them to pack materials appropriately. If necessary, give them folders to use and instruct them on how to label appropriately.

## A.7. Creating Agent Records and Subject Headings

### What Are Authority Records?

According to the Society of American Archivists, an authority record “*contains information about the preferred form of a name or subject heading.*” The two forms of authority records needed for an archival description are Agent records and Subject headings. Agent records describe the people related to the collection, while Subject headings refer to (among other things) places, professions, industries, and concepts represented in the collection. Authority records are important for establishing standard vocabularies around personal/organizational names and subjects. Standard vocabularies are necessary for proper metadata management and the successful use of linked data across various sources. Linked data involves attaching Agent and Subject headings to an archival collection like a system of tags, linking the resource to other collections or publications across the organization’s catalog that share the same people or subject matter. Since the headings serve as linked tags, consistency in format is required to connect them. For example, **Doe, Jane, 1995-** will not connect to **Jane Doe**.

Another important thing to remember when creating, in particular, subject headings, is that standard terms used to describe groups of people, races, ethnicities, social identities, etc. may be problematic. The problematic nature of standardized terms comes from the fact that, though the terminology may be outdated or unacceptable, they are so integrated into complex

cataloging systems that they are difficult to change quickly on a large scale. However, many institutions (including Brandeis) are working to mitigate the harm caused by these terms, as well as to come up with acceptable alternatives for use in our catalog.

The following sections will describe Agent records and Subject headings in more detail, and provide tips for creating them. Please note that the work of creating authority records is usually completed by the Metadata Cataloging Team in CATSS, but in some cases, you may be asked by your Supervisor to create them.

## Agent Records

An Agent record provides a biographical summary for a person, an organization, or an academic/administrative department featured in a collection -- these summaries are usually written for the entity that is the creator of the collection. Creating an Agent record involves establishing an authorized heading (or official version) for the name of a person or an organization, as well as creating a descriptive record for the person or organization/department. The authorized heading, or official version of the name, is the main part of the Agent record, visible as a linked tag within the record. The rest of the descriptive record includes a link to the source of the authorized heading (known as the authority ID), the metadata standard used to construct the name, the agent's active dates, and a Biographical or Administrative History Note describing the history of the person or organization/department.

► Before creating a new Agent record, be sure to first search or browse the Agent records in [ArchivesSpace](#) to see if it already exists. It is important not to create duplicate Agent records, in order to maintain clean metadata links.

► If you have to create an Agent, refer to the [Library of Congress Name Authority File \(LCNAF\)](#) via LC Linked Data Service to locate an authorized form of the personal or organizational name. You will need the following data:

- Authorized form of name (including any prefix, suffix, title, etc.)
- Active dates
- Authority ID (URI from the LCNAF)

If there is no record in the LCNAF, see [DACS](#) ([DACS 2.6](#), [DACS 9-9.4](#) and [DACS 10.1-10.4](#)) for rules about creators and forming names for persons, families and corporate bodies.

► If you need to find the official name of a Brandeis University academic department, you can refer to the [University Bulletin](#) from the Registrar's Office. For the name of a Brandeis administrative department, you can refer to the [A-Z listing of official web pages](#) from the Office of Communications.

► Specific, step-by-step instructions for creating an Agent record in ArchivesSpace can be found in [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#).

► Biographical or Administrative History Notes should be recorded in the Agent record. See the section below for information about creating a Biographical or Administrative History Note.

## What is a Biographical or Administrative History Note?

A biographical note describes the creator or compiler of the collection. This provides contextual information by placing the materials in relation to the personality that either created or collected them. Similarly, an administrative history note provides an administrative chronology for an organizational record creator. Biographical and administrative history information should be concise.

► If the creator is a recognizable figure, family, or organization, do a brief internet search to check for existing biographies or written histories from which to draw. For well documented persons and organizations, do not rewrite their history but provide a brief summary. Include the basic information below and you may also include a boilerplate statement such as “This is a brief overview of the subject. Extensive reliable sources on this/these persons / institutions / subjects have been previously published.” It is important to reference existing biographies for archival subjects, especially in the case of a subject with a marginalized identity. Sourcing biographical information that was actually created by members of that person’s community should be prioritized over writing your own description.

► Regardless of the source material used to write the biographical or administrative history, have care for how you describe people and use anti-oppressive language in your descriptions. Refer to the [Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia: Anti-Racist Description Resources](#). This quote from that resource provides an example of a situation in which description can be harmful to both the subject and any potential researchers from the subject’s community:

*“Be mindful of how individuals are described in authority records, and educate yourself and staff on compassionate and anti-oppressive creation of such records. As one example of harmful name authority creation, one institution associated the only known related date, 1832, with an enslaved individual -- the date that the institution itself had purchased him. By using “Fl. 1832” as a distinguishing characteristic, the institution was centering that transaction as the most significant event in the individual’s life...Make use of events, places, occupations, and other known signifiers that humanize rather than dehumanize Black individuals.” (Archives for Black Lives in Philadelphia’s Anti-Racist Description Working Group)*

► For a biographical note, be sure to include basic personal, educational, and professional facts. An ideal entry features:

- Date and place of birth
- Full and variant forms of name
- Occupations
- Significant accomplishments
- Places of residence and work
- Family members
- Date and place of death

► For an administrative history note be sure to include:

- Names/name changes
- Date of establishment and/or dissolution
- Mergers
- Institutional/ organizational function
- Significant events
- Geographical location

For writing an Administrative or Biographical History Note, you should refer to [DACS 2.7](#).

## Subject Headings

A subject heading provides a summary of the main subjects or themes contained in a collection. The authorized subject heading is visible as a linked tag within the archival collection record, connecting it to other materials in the Library's catalog that share the same subject. Subject headings can take the following forms:

- Simple nouns: Children; Dogs; Libraries
- Compound nouns: Bioengineering; Electrometallurgy
- Nouns with parenthetical qualifiers: Seals (Animals)
- Nouns with adjectives: Wild dogs; Academic libraries; Sculpture, American; Science, Ancient
- Phrases with prepositions: Photography of dogs
- Compound phrases: Children and animals; Bolts and nuts; Comic strips
- Complex phrases: Names carved on trees
- Topical, name, or form headings with subdivisions: Taxation--Effect of inflation on

As shown above, subdivisions add more specificity to the description of the subject. The main term is the first term before any subdivision. For example, *Feminism* is the main term for the subject heading, *Feminism -- Religious aspects -- Judaism*. In that case, *religious aspects* and *Judaism* are subdivisions.

According to the Library of Congress documentation, entitled ***Assigning and Constructing Subject Headings***, subject headings should only be created for themes that are represented in

twenty percent of the collection, or more. Generally, there should be no more than six headings assigned to any one object, and in the case of archives, the object is the collection as a whole. The descriptive fields for a subject heading include the authorized subject term, a link to the source of the authorized heading (known as the authority ID), the source of the term, and the category or type of subject.

► Before creating a new subject heading, be sure to first search or browse the subject records in [ArchivesSpace](#) to see if it already exists. It is important not to create duplicate subject headings, in order to maintain clean metadata links.

► If you have to create a Subject record, search for an authorized heading using the [Library of Congress Subject Headings](#) database via LC Linked Data Service. You will need to collect and record the following data:

- Authorized subject term (including any subdivisions)
- Authority ID (URI from the LCNAF)
- Source
- Type or category of subject term

If you cannot locate an authorized LC subject heading, consult Archives staff.

► Specific, step-by-step instructions for creating a subject heading in ArchivesSpace can be found in [Chapter 8. Entering Finding Aids into ArchivesSpace](#).

► For in-depth instructions for creating subject headings please see the [Library of Congress Subject Headings Manual PDF Files](#) and/or the [Guidelines For Formulating Subject Headings For Archival Collections](#) from the University of Miami.

## A.8. ArchivesSpace Vocabulary List

[ArchivesSpace](#) uses language to refer to the various parts of a finding aid which differ from common archival vocabulary. Following is a list of the most important items:

ArchivesSpace Term	Explanation
Resource	This is a record type which in archival parlance is usually called a <b>collection</b> .
File	This is a level of description which in archives we usually call a <b>folder</b> .
Component	A component can be any descriptive entity which is not a collection/resource, so a series, subseries, folder, box, etc.

ArchivesSpace Term	Explanation
Container	This refers to any type of enclosure archival materials can be found in. It could be a box, oversize folder, file cabinet, etc.
Digital object	This term is also used in the archives field, but is the only term in ArchivesSpace to refer to any type of electronic or digital file. So, it could be a photo, text file, sound file, moving image file, etc.
Classification	This function in ArchivesSpace is equivalent to what is often called a <b>record group</b> .

## A.9. Document Removed Form

### Robert D. Farber University Archives & Special Collections

#### DOCUMENT REMOVED FORM

**The following item has been removed from this location:**

(include title or description of item, date, and number of pages)

---

---

**Purpose of removal:**

---

---

**Originally filed in:**

Collection name: \_\_\_\_\_

Series/subseries: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Folder title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Folder number: \_\_\_\_\_ Box number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Relocated to:**

Collection name: \_\_\_\_\_

Series/subseries: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Folder title: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Folder number: \_\_\_\_\_ Box number: \_\_\_\_\_

Restriction end date: \_\_\_\_\_

**DOCUMENT REMOVED**

## A.10. OCLC Quick Cost Estimator for Archival Processing

The OCLC Research Library Partnership's (RLP) Collection Building and Operational Impacts Working Group developed a framework called The Total Cost of Stewardship. One of the tools developed is the Quick Cost Estimator, which can help you calculate the number of hours needed depending on the level of processing and size of the collection. The levels are not the same as Brandeis', but this can still be a useful tool.

The Quick Cost Estimator is an Excel spreadsheet and can be found on the OCLC website, under the page for the **Total Cost of Stewardship: Responsible Collection Building in Archives and Special Collections**.