

# **Archival Processing Manual**



## Archival Processing Manual

This manual discusses the basics of archival processing in the RIT Archives. The guide is broken into distinct sections to help you understand your role in making archival resources available to students, faculty, staff, and other researchers. Sections include an overview of basic concepts in archival processing, followed by information on accessions, preliminary inventories, processing plans, processing tasks, the creation of finding aids, and metadata entry into ArchivesSpace.

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## Overview of Archival Processing

### What is Processing?

Before a collection can be made available to researchers, an archivist gathers and analyzes information about the collection; arranges and describes its contents; and creates a finding aid in order for the user to discover relevant materials. “Processing” is the term used to encompass all of the work required to make collections available and accessible for research.

There are three main parts of processing:

- Gathering and analyzing information about the collection
- Arranging and describing the collection
- Creating a finding aid to allow access to the collection

### What Is a Finding Aid?

A finding aid is a written description of archival materials that gives the repository physical and intellectual control over the materials. Finding aids enable researchers to discover the nature and contents of a collection. They are made available through the RIT Archives’ webpage, archival catalogs, and web search engines. Finding aids can exist in “paper” formats (e.g., Word document, PDF, typed pages) or as web-based, EAD-encoded finding aids.

Finding aids typically consist of summary information, administrative information, controlled access terms, notes, and a container list. Essential information to be recorded includes the collection title, name of creator, date range, extent (size), language, abstract, location, acquisition information, restrictions, biographical/historical information, and other notes. Many of these elements are determined following the arrangement and description of a collection. When processing a collection, it is important to consider these elements because you may come across information which will be helpful when describing the collection as a whole.

The container list is a detailed inventory of a collection. A collection may be described at the box level, folder level, and (rarely) at the item level. Your processing plan will determine the level of description to be used. Descriptions in a container list should be clear and concise. Folder-level description typically consists of the box and folder number, a brief description/title of the folder’s contents, and a date/date range. The RIT Archives prefers folder-level description for its archival collections in order to best facilitate discovery for its researchers.

## Basic Principles of Archival Description

- **Provenance**
  - Provenance tells the history of ownership. It refers to the origin of an item or collection, identifying the original owner or creator, as well as subsequent owners and creators.
  - Provenance also refers to the principle that the records of a given creator must not be intermingled with those of other records creators. In archival studies, this principle is also called *respect des fonds*. Records of different origins must be kept separate in order to preserve their context.
  - Provenance stresses the original context, use, and meaning of archival materials.
  
- **Original Order**
  - Original order is the organization and sequence of records established by the creator of the records.
  - The creator's original organizational structure is useful to researchers.
  - Archival processing is more manageable when you work with the existing organizational structure (if there is one).
  - Original order is not necessarily the same as the order in which the materials were received. Archivists may need to restore original order. (Examples: A company utilized alphabetical or subject classification systems. A family originally kept their correspondence in chronological order.)
  - Archivists may need to impose an order on materials if the creator(s) stored or transferred items in a haphazard way. (Archivists should respect original order, but they do not need to respect "original chaos.")
  
- **Fundamental Aspects of a Record**
  1. *Content* is the intellectual substance of a document, including text, data, symbols, numerals, images, and sound.
  2. *Context* is the organizational, functional, and operational circumstances surrounding materials' creation, receipt, storage, or use, and its relationship to other materials.
  3. *Structure* is the manner in which elements are organized, interrelated, and displayed.

## Accessions

Accessioning is the process through which the archives gains initial control over a newly acquired, donated, or “discovered” collection. A new collection is typically called an accession until it is processed and described.

- 1) Ensure that the RIT Archives has signed documentation to take control of the materials. If coming from an active RIT department/faculty/staff member or student organization, a signed **Internal Transfer Form** will suffice. If the materials are from a retired RIT faculty/staff member, alumna(e), or community group member, then the RIT Archives will need to have a signed **Deed of Gift**.
- 2) Assign an Accession ID and create an Accession record in ArchivesSpace. (See “[ArchivesSpace Metadata Entry](#)” section for more details.) Make sure that location is indicated in the Accession record.

## Preliminary Inventory

An inventory is a basic list that documents the contents of a collection. Most inventories are at the box/folder level and describe generally the formats and topics within a collection. The information below is geared toward physical materials, but can be adapted for digital collections as well.

Create a collections documentation folder within the Archives folder on the shared drive, at this main path: [\\TWCFILERSERVER\Archives\Archival collections \(prev Finding Guides\)](#). Folder should be nested within the proper classification (RITArc, RITArt, RITDSA, or RITSpec resources); naming convention on the folder should first start with the resource identifier then the collection title [e.g., “RITArc-0021\_Ezra Andrews papers” or “RITDSA-0024\_NTID Performing Arts programs”].

Utilize the Preliminary Inventory template [which is located within the [\\TWCFILERSERVER\Archives\Archival collections \(prev Finding Guides\)-templates-](#) folder] as your basis for capturing the information.

- Check to see if there is an existing inventory! If there is an existing inventory, check the inventory against the materials at hand.
- Do not attempt to organize materials as you do your inventory. If you notice something out of order, add it to your inventory notes for later action.
- Your inventory should include:
  - ArchivesSpace accession ID
  - Box numbers
  - Box-level and folder information: title(s) and topic(s), date(s) if given
  - Notes on formats and other issues (see below)

- If you notice any of the following when doing your inventory, please consult an RIT Archives staff member:
  - Mold or pest activity
  - Extremely fragile paper
  - Damaged/fading visual materials
  - Deformed or damaged film or magnetic tape
  - Odd or strong smells
- In your inventory, make specific note of any of the following:
  - Duplicates
    - More than 2-3 copies or reprints of an item
  - Missing materials
    - Incomplete series
    - Gaps in dates
    - Missing items in folders/boxes
  - Obsolete or unusual media
    - Visual (photographs, negatives, artwork, etc.)
    - Audiovisual (magnetic media formats, digital media formats, audio cassettes, LP records, etc.)
    - Electronic (CDs, DVDs, video games, etc.)
    - Books and runs of serials/journals/magazines (except manuscripts/drafts)
- Verify if there are any digital objects or series within the collection. Describe to the best of your abilities. Start to think about if these will be arranged separately from the physical materials in the collection.
- Document your inventory in the Preliminary Inventory template.
- Save your inventory within the collection's folder on the shared drive.
- Print and place one copy of your inventory in the first box in the collection, for your reference.

### **Re-Housing?**

Re-housing physical materials should occur during the arrangement and description process rather than during the preliminary inventory stage to ensure that materials are not accidentally mixed up and that any important contextual information on original folders or containers is retained. However, if you notice any mold or pest activity on the materials during inventory, you should immediately confer with an RIT Archives staff member (and will likely end up separating those materials out from the rest of the collection).



## Processing Plan

Utilize the Processing Plan template [which is located within the [\\TWCFILERIVER\Archives\Archival collections \(prev Finding Guides\)-templates-](https://twcfileriver.archives.archivalcollections(prevFindingGuides)-templates-) folder] as your basis for capturing the information. This is applicable for both physical materials and digital collections.

RIT Archives	<NAME OF COLLECTION> Processing Plan
<b>&lt;NAME OF COLLECTION&gt; Archival Processing Plan</b>	
This processing plan contains the following sections:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General information about collection</li> <li>• Description and condition of records</li> <li>• Access</li> <li>• Current arrangement of collection</li> <li>• Proposed arrangement of collection</li> <li>• Resources necessary for completion of project</li> <li>• Scheduling information</li> </ul>	
<b>General information about collection</b>	
Collection title: <NAME OF COLLECTION>	
Dates: YYYY- YYYY(inclusive); YYYY- YYYY(bulk)	
Approximate number of items/boxes: # boxes	
Linear feet: approx. # linear feet	
ArchivesSpace accession number: 20XX.XXX	
Classification for processing: <RITArc, RITArt, RITDSA, RITSpec>	
ArchivesSpace resource identifier: XXX.XXXX	
Date collection received in archives: <DATE>	
Inventory created? Yes/no	
To be processed by: <NAME> in <MONTH/YEAR>	

- Review existing collection information.
  - Check the preliminary inventory.
  - Check for any collateral materials (correspondence, deeds of gift, etc.) that may have been included with the collection. Verify intellectual property transfer on deed of gift, if applicable.
  - Determine the extent of digital objects or series within the collection.
- Conduct research in reference sources.
  - Begin to understand the creator(s) of your collection by searching histories, biographies, related archival collections, and other reference sources.
  - Note your sources. You may need to revisit these resources and reference them for your finding aid descriptions.
- Study the contents of the collection.
  - Using the inventory and other documentation you have gathered, survey the contents of the collection. Check your inventory against the boxes and take notes.
  - Gather information about the collection’s provenance, activities and functions, any existing physical arrangement, as well as possible subjects/topics.

- Processing levels: The default level of archival processing will be done at the folder level. (Only in very rare cases will items be processed to the item level.) For reference, the levels of processing and their accompanying documentation standards are as follows:
  - *Collection level*: Rarely done, but possible for very small or homogenous collections. Includes a basic record in ArchivesSpace.
  - *Series level*: Rough sort of series of a collection (see arrangement and description below for more information). Includes finding aid record in ArchivesSpace that includes scope and content notes for each series, as well as basic date ranges.
  - *Folder level*: Most commonly used processing level. Files and folders are arranged beneath series, with little to no effort given to sorting individual materials within folders. Includes finding aid in ArchivesSpace with detailed notes, series, box, and folder descriptions. Includes date ranges.
  - *Item level*: Rarely done, but possible for very small collections or individual items. Includes detailed finding aid record in ArchivesSpace. (Often seen with correspondence files.)
- Time required for processing: Yale's Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library created and shared a widely-used standard in the archives field for estimating [rates of processing](#). Factors to consider when estimating time include the proposed level of processing (collection, series, folder, or item); preservation considerations; and economies of scale. A good rule of thumb for folder-level description of a collection with minor organizational issues is 15 hours per linear foot.
- The Processing Plan template contains the following sections:
  - General information about collection
  - Description and condition of records
  - Access
  - Current arrangement of collection
  - Proposed arrangement of collection
  - Resources necessary for completion of project
  - Scheduling information
- Document your plan in the Processing Plan template. Please check with an RIT Archives staff member if you have any questions!
- Save your processing plan within the collection's folder on the shared drive.
- Print and place one copy of your processing plan with the preliminary inventory, and utilize while processing the collection.

## Processing Tasks and Finding Aid Creation

### Arrangement

Archival materials are seldom received in perfect order with lengthy documentation of their origins, structure, topics, and historical significance. If you are processing a collection that does not appear to have an organizational structure, you must establish intellectual control over the collection through arrangement.

Arrangement is the process of organizing materials with respect to their provenance and original order. Following the principle of original order, the Archivist attempts to retain as much of the original organization structure as possible to protect the context of the materials. Re-organization occurs only when access is difficult, or if the materials are determined to be unusable due to their current organizational scheme (or lack thereof). Collections are frequently divided into series based on their physical type or format.

You may determine an organizational structure after consulting with the collection and its contents and reference sources. Any changes made to the order of the collection or any organizational structures imposed on it should be documented in the Scope and Content Note.

- Potential Series - By Material Type (Genre/Form)
  - *Biographical or genealogical material*: biographies, resumes, clippings, family histories, questionnaires, etc.
  - *Correspondence*: official, professional, personal, and family letters, postcards, telegrams, notes, memoranda, cards with substantive notes, etc.
  - *Educational material*: report cards, class notes, diplomas, certificates, etc.
  - *Financial papers*: bills, receipts, account books, ledgers, checks, promissory notes, tax lists, etc.
  - *Legal papers*: bonds, court summons, judgments, deeds, land records, estate papers, insurance policies, mortgages, wills, briefs, land plats, marriage bonds/licenses, etc.
  - *Writings and speeches*: addresses, sermons, manuscript drafts, essays, memoirs, research notes, etc.
  - *Diaries (or journals)*
  - *Photographic material*: photographs, slides, negatives, photo albums
  - *Printed material*: periodicals, pamphlets, flyers, programs, playbills, broadsides, invitations, cards, etc.
  - *Audiovisual material*: audio tapes, cassettes, videos, films, etc.
  - *Professional papers*
  - *Research material*: typically used for subject-organized research material such as articles, research notes, reference works, etc.
  - *Clippings*: newspaper or magazine articles, illustrations, or other cut-outs
  - *Advertisements*: proofs, clippings, concept sketches, etc.
  - *Scrapbooks/scrapbook material*: clippings, photographs, etc.
- Some series warrant further breakdown. (Large groupings within series, such as manuscript drafts or research notes within Writings and Speeches, can be made into subseries, or even sub-subseries.)

## Processing Concerns

- Basic preservation practices:
  - Remove and discard vinyl, metal, or cardboard binders (unless the binder has important information that cannot be transcribed) and folder the contents.
  - Remove and discard deteriorating, acidic containers (including manila envelopes) that lack informational value.
  - Remove and discard metal fasteners and replace with stainless steel or plastic paper clips, if necessary.
  - Photocopy newspaper clippings onto acid-free paper and dispose of originals.
  - Fold sheets of acid-free paper in half to create a sling around smaller, acidic ephemera. Interleave acidic bound pages with sheets of acid-free buffer paper.
  - Place photographs into polyester sleeves or other appropriate housing (speak to a supervisor if you are unsure, particularly if you find glass negatives or negatives/film with an unusual odor).
- Restricted materials:
  - Often, restrictions are indicated in the collection's deed of gift or collateral paperwork. If you have any questions about material you believe is sensitive or in need of restrictions such as medical records, Social Security numbers, or other information, please consult with an RIT Archives staff member.
  - While processing collections in the RIT Archives, you may find references to Personally Identifiable Information (PII). This may include Social Security numbers, medical information, student grades, bank account details, or credit card numbers within the archival materials. Verify with a supervisor first, then redact these numbers and photocopy the page onto a sheet of Permalife paper. Securely shred the original if it is determined that the copy will suffice. You may note on the reverse of the Permalife paper "[SSN on original redacted and shredded. <your initials>, <date>]."
  - Restricted material should be removed from the file and placed in a folder with the same label as the original. The folder retained with the unrestricted collection should contain a sheet of acid-free paper printed with "This folder has been designated as 'restricted' by the donor and will not be available until YYYY."
  - If individual items are removed from folders, they should be replaced with a single sheet of paper marked "This item has been designated as 'restricted' by the donor and will not be available until YYYY." Though, you should try to remove entire folders rather than single pieces of paper, as this may be problematic when attempting to re-join the collection once the restrictions have expired.
  - The new folder(s) containing restricted material should be marked "RESTRICTED" and placed together at the end of the collection in a separate box, also marked "RESTRICTED."

- Restrictions are to be indicated in the finding aid under the Conditions Governing Use and/or Conditions Governing Access note.
  - Example:*
    - Conditions Governing Access:** Some materials of financial or legal nature have been restricted by the donor. These documents will not be open for research use until the year 2048. They are denoted as such in this finding aid and are separated from unrestricted files.
    - Conditions Governing Use:** The remainder of this collection is open for research use.
- Weeding
  - Some material should be weeded if it is determined not to have permanent research value. Check with deed of gift to see if donor wants any irrelevant personal materials returned to them or disposed of on-site. Examples include:
    - Routine personal, financial, and medical records
    - Duplicates without marginalia or other added info (one copy is retained)
    - Memorabilia
    - Large groupings of routine forms, letters, or requests
    - Anniversary or birthday congratulations, routine invitations
    - Receipts
    - Individual income tax returns
  - Dispose of numerous copies of general documents, such as fliers, brochures, or newspaper clippings. Retain a maximum of 3 copies.
- Additions and Interfiling
  - Some collections have multiple additions, which are treated as new accessions. If multiple accessions form one archival collection, the Resource ID in ArchivesSpace may be a newly-created one instead of using one accession's identifier. [Example: Four separate accessions comprise the Empire State Association of the Deaf records; the final collection may be given a newly-created Resource ID of "2024.ESAD."]
  - All additions/accretions are considered part of the same collection.
  - Small additions can be interfiled with the original collection if they fit within the existing box and folder system.
  - Larger additions should be re-housed and shelved at the end of the original collection. Additions to existing series should be listed together in the finding aid with their box and folder numbers identified.
- Digital objects, series, or collections
  - Questions to ask yourself: Should the original file name be retained? Is the file saved in an unstable format, and if so, should you convert to a more stable file format? How can you best describe the digital files in a finding aid? Will they be stored on the network for access? Will you want to attach digital objects to the resource record in ArchivesSpace?
  - Ensure that both a preservation copy and an access copy exist.

## Re-Housing

- Begin to re-house the collection in acid-free, lignin-free folders and boxes.
- When re-housing:
  - Remove rusty fasteners and pins, replacing them with plastic clips or stainless steel paperclips. Remove rubber bands when possible.
  - Unfold materials (talk to an RIT Archives staff member if you encounter fragile folded materials or need any assistance).
  - If you encounter oversized items, utilize oversized folder(s) and/or box(es).
  - Replace original folders (typically office supply-quality) with acid-free, lignin-free folders.
  - Do not use metal or plastic paper clips when re-housing. These materials can damage archival materials.
  - Do not place any sticky notes directly on the collection's materials; it is okay to temporarily use sticky notes on folders or boxes. (And pencils only!)
  - When inserting pages into folders, do not overfill them. Archival folders include creases that you can use to expand the folder's capacity. If you cannot fit everything in one folder, create a second folder and denote with a phrase such as "Part 1 of 2."
  - Use special enclosures for photographs, videos, and other media.
  - Replace non-archival boxes with acid-free, lignin-free boxes.
  - If the amount of folders or objects do not fully fill the appropriately-sized box, then a box spacer may be needed to ensure there isn't any "slumping" or damage to the materials from shifting within the box.
  - Ask an RIT Archives staff member if you need assistance identifying or ordering any preservation supplies.

## Labeling Physical Collections

- **Boxes**

- Box labels should be placed on the front (side facing from shelf) of every archival box. When a box is oversized, please include a label on the lid and the base of the box (as lids can be accidentally separated).
- Box label templates are available within the [\\TWCFILESERVER\Archives\Archival collections \(prev Finding Guides\)\-templates-](#) folder.
  - Use “*LABELS\_doc box sized\_Avery5164*” file for standard upright document boxes or oversized folders. (Make sure printer has Avery 5164 label stock for printing these.)
  - Use “*LABELS\_OS-flat box sized\_Avery5163*” file for oversized or print boxes. (Make sure printer has Avery 5163 label stock for printing these.)
- Box label should include:
  - Title of collection
  - RIT Archives resource identifier
  - Box #

Example:            John Q. Smith papers  
                          RITArc.0001  
                          Box 1

- **Folders**

- Folder labels are written (in pencil) on upper tab of document folder. Include:
    - Folder #
    - Folder title
    - Dates (if undated, put “n.d.” or best guess in brackets)
- Examples:            Folder 2            Publicity information, 1952-1957  
                          Folder 3            Publicity information, n.d. [c. 1960s-1970s]
- Oversized folders should be labeled the same way as a document folder, but oversized folders may receive a printed “box label” to indicate that they are also a container within a collection.

Example:            John Q. Smith papers  
                          Oversized Folder 2

- **Objects**

- When items in the archival collection cannot be easily put into a folder, they can be stored in boxes and noted as an object.
- If an object is flat, bound, or printed, you may want to write label information (in pencil) on a sheet of acid-free paper [or a strip of a folder] to keep with the object.
- If an object is 3D, you may want to write the label information (in pencil) onto a small piece of Filmoplast and attach to an unobtrusive part of the object.

Example:            Object 2            Alpha, Inc. publicity scrapbook, 1982

## Description

When you created your processing plan, you will have determined which level you will be using to describe the collection.

Utilize the Finding Aid template [which is located within the [\\TWCFILERSERVER\Archives\Archival collections \(prev Finding Guides\)\-templates-](#) folder] as your basis for capturing the information.

RIT Archives	<collection name>
<b>Finding Aid to the</b> <collection name>, <dates>	
<b>Summary Information</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Creator:</b> (primary); (secondary)	
<b>ID:</b>	
<b>Date:</b> (inclusive); (bulk)	
<b>Extent:</b>	
<b>Language:</b>	
<b>Abstract:</b>	
<b>Repository:</b>	
RIT Archives	
Rochester Institute of Technology	
Wallace Library	
90 Lomb Memorial Drive	
Rochester, NY 14623	
ritarchive@rit.edu	
(585) 475-2557	
<b>Administrative Information</b>	
<b>Conditions Governing Use:</b> This collection is open for research use.	
<b>Custodial History:</b>	
<b>Preferred citation for publication:</b> <collection title>, (Box #, Folder #), RIT Archives, Rochester, NY, 14623.	
<b>Processed by:</b> <staff name><month/year>	
<b>Revision Note:</b> [delete if not needed]	
<b>Controlled Access Terms</b>	
<b>Personal Names</b>	
• add	
<b>Corporate Names</b>	
• add	
<b>Subjects</b>	
• add	

Using the guide [Describing Archives: A Content Standard](#) (DACS) and your research, create prose statements and compile information about the collection for the collection's descriptive elements.



## Required Elements in the RIT Archives

The following elements are required for RIT Archives collections described using both paper finding aids and ArchivesSpace. Refer to DACS or review previous finalized finding aids for examples.

- *Collection (Resource)*
  - Summary Information
    - Collection title
    - Creator
    - ArchivesSpace Resource ID
    - Date range (inclusive and bulk)
    - Extent (in linear feet)
    - Language(s)
    - Abstract
    - Repository contact information
  - Administrative Information
    - Conditions Governing Access (if restrictions exist)
    - Conditions Governing Use
    - Custodial History
    - Preferred citation for publication
    - Processed by
    - Revision note (if necessary)
  - Controlled Access Terms [use [Authorities](#) or local terms]
    - Personal names
    - Corporate names
    - Subjects
  - Notes
    - Biographical/Historical Note
    - Collection Scope and Content Note
    - Related Materials (if necessary)
    - System of Arrangement
- *Series (Components)*
  - Basic Description
    - Series/Subseries Title
    - Series number/Subseries letter (Component Unique ID)
    - Date range (inclusive)
    - Container Information (Instances)
  - Notes
    - Scope and Content Note

## Contents List

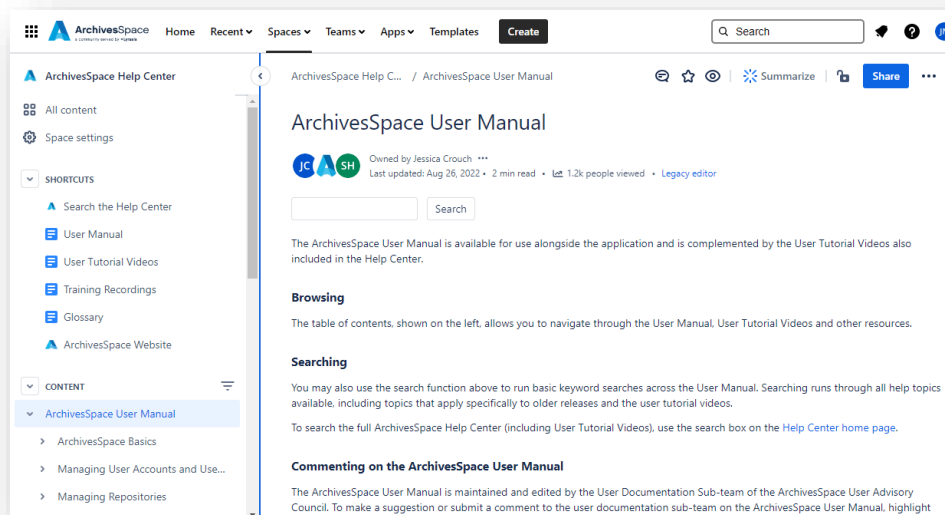
- In ArchivesSpace, containers are recorded as **Instances**. Containers may be hierarchical [e.g., “Box 1, Folder 1” or “Box 2, Object 2” or “Oversized Folder 1”].
- Folder Title
  - Use titles that reflect or duplicate existing headings, when appropriate.
  - If no titles are given, create a title that best describes the contents of the folder. Be simple, clear, and consistent. Use keywords.
  - Only the first word of the title is capitalized unless it includes proper nouns.
  - Omit initial articles unless it is an essential part of the title or supplied by the creator in the original title.
  - If you are unsure about a format or type, refer to the Getty Research Institute’s Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT), a thesaurus of cultural and material heritage concepts.
- Date
  - Denoting the year is most important, followed by adding the month if also possible. Typically only single items will have a MM/DD/YYYY to list out.
  - Other forms may be accepted as appropriate: before 1867; 1892 or 1893; 1890s; c. 1960s; c. 1960s-1970s
  - If date is not indicated but you can make an educated guess, denote in brackets “circa YYYY” or “c. YYYY-YYYY.” If time span is too large to make educated guess, write “undated” or “no date” [or abbreviate “n.d.”].
  - If group of materials in a folder is mostly dated but a few items do not have dates, it is acceptable to note date span with “n.d.” following the date span [e.g., “...sketches, 1960-1969 and n.d.”].
- Complete the Finding Aid template for the collection.
- Save your finding aid draft within the collection’s folder on the shared drive.
- Send draft to an RIT Archives staff member for review. Upon approval, save the file as “Finding Aid to the <collection title>\_<DATE>.” Move extraneous files from collection’s main folder on shared drive.
- Input data into ArchivesSpace (see next section). [ArchivesSpace wraps each element in the appropriate EAD tags, resulting in collection code which can later be exported as EAD XML and wrapped in an XSLT stylesheet to display an EAD online finding aid.]

## ArchivesSpace Metadata Entry

This section explains the basic steps for creating an Accession record, a Resource record, Agent records, and Subject records in ArchivesSpace.

### Reference ArchivesSpace User Manual

1. Access the ArchivesSpace Help Center at:  
<https://archivesspace.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/ADC/pages/917045261/ArchivesSpace+Help+Center>
2. At top right of page, click on “Sign in” icon and log on with assigned Confluence user name.
3. User manual is at this link:  
<https://archivesspace.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/ArchivesSpaceUserManual/pages/909934631/ArchivesSpace+User+Manual>
4. Keyword search available in Search bar; browse using sections on left-hand side of page



### Logging into ArchivesSpace - Internal module

1. Access the ArchivesSpace internal module at: <https://archivesspacestaff.rit.edu/>
2. Sign in with username and password on center of main page.
3. Enter user name and password, then click “Sign In”
4. Click on “Select Repository” [upper right on page]
5. From drop-down menu, select “RIT Arch.”
6. Click on “Select Repository”
7. You are now active in the RIT Archives repository on ArchivesSpace (as opposed to Cary Colleciton, Vignelli, or IPI).

## **Basics of ArchivesSpace data entry** [see ArchivesSpace User Manual for more details]

Use finding aid as basis for information to be entered into ArchivesSpace. (Copying/pasting from finding aid word doc is easiest!) When accessing an existing record, make sure to select Edit to make changes or View to simply see the record’s metadata.

### **A. Create an Accession Record**

1. On toolbar with home icon on main page, click on “Create” > “Accession”
2. Enter required elements, which are:
  - i. Identifier [next available Accession ID for the calendar year (e.g., “2023:059”]
  - ii. Accession date [enter YYYY-MM-DD; if date unknown, put YYYY-MM-01]
3. Add Title [for our reference; e.g., “Sidney Crosby papers,” “second accession lot of Archie S. Pirit papers”]
4. Select appropriate dropdown for Acquisition Type [Transfer, Gift, Purchase, Deposit]
5. Select appropriate dropdown for Resource Type [RIT Archives, Deaf Studies Archive, RIT Art Collection, Special Collection]
6. Enter other data into relevant note fields where appropriate [e.g., restriction information; related resources or accessions]
7. For newly acquired collections, also enter information into Content Description, Provenance, and General Note fields for reference.
8. Do *not* check Publish for Accession records [these remain internal only]
9. Scroll down to “Collections Management” section and enter at least “Priority” [(blank for completed collection), Low, Medium, High].
10. Click “Save.”

The screenshot shows the ArchivesSpace interface for editing an accession record. The breadcrumb trail is: Home / Accessions / WITR radio station history, posters, photographs, and ephemera [addition to RITArc-0057] / Edit. The main content area is titled 'WITR radio station history, posters, photographs, and ephemera [addition to RITArc-0057]' with an 'Accession' tag. Below this is the 'Basic Information' section with the following fields:

- Title:** WITR radio station history, posters, photographs, and ephemera [addition to RITArc-0057]
- Identifier \*:** 2023:047
- Accession Date:** 2023-11-01 (with a calendar icon and example text: e.g. YYYY-MM-DD)
- Publish?:**
- Content Description:** Approx. 1 linear foot of historical documentation binders, materials in folders, and photographs relating to WITR; approx. 3 flat file drawers [9 linear feet?] of posters and other ephemera. Posters and photographs were removed from the walls of the WITR radio station office in September-October 2023. [Photographs were taken by WITR members before the walls were stripped.] Posters, stickers, and ephemera from bands are the majority of this collection; dates range from approx. the 1990s-2023.

On the left side, there is a navigation menu with categories like Basic Information, Languages, Dates, Extents, Agent Links, Related Resources, Component Links, Related Accessions, Subjects, External Documents, Rights Statements, Metadata Rights Declarations, Instances, Deaccessions, Collection Management, Classifications, and User Defined. A 'Save Accession' button is at the bottom of this menu. At the top right of the main content area, there are buttons for 'Save', 'Add Event', 'Spawn', 'Transfer', 'More', and 'Suppress'.

11. At top of Accession record, located “Add Event” button. From dropdown, select “Processing New” and click “Add Event.”
  - i. From New Event record page, go to “Event/Time” section, and at Label, select “Record Keeping,” then under Type “Single,” then select today’s date from calendar. That shows that we have indicated this Accession is added to the processing queue on today’s date.
  - ii. Under “Agent Links,” select “Implementer” from Role dropdown, and type in/select your name under Agents.
  - iii. Save Event at bottom of page.
12. When location in archives stacks (or elsewhere) is determined for the accession, be sure to indicate this under the Instance section.

## B. Create a Resource Record

1. On toolbar with home icon on main page, click on “Create” > “Resource”
2. Enter required elements, which are:
  - i. Title [follow DACS (e.g., Sherlock Holmes papers, Weasley family papers, Hedgehog Owners Society records)]
  - ii. Identifier [Argus Object ID/ArchivesSpace ID; if there are multiple accessions comprising a collection, create new identifier (e.g., 2015.bss)]
  - iii. Level of description [typically Collection at this level]
  - iv. Dates [can add inclusive and/or bulk date signifiers]
  - v. Extents [use approx. linear feet for physical materials; GB for digital materials]
3. Select appropriate dropdown for Resource Type [i.e., Collection, Papers, Records]
4. Select appropriate dropdown for Language [English]
5. Check Publish
6. Enter other data into relevant note fields where appropriate [e.g., Finding Aid data, restriction information]
7. Click “Save Resource” [records are not auto-saved so be sure to save sporadically]
8. Note: Before adding information to the Resource record, you may wish to create Agent and Subject records for controlled access terms which do not already exist in ArchivesSpace.

The screenshot displays the ArchivesSpace web interface. The main content area shows the 'Basic Information' form for a resource record. The title is '<subject>RIT fraternities and sororities</subject> record'. The identifier is 'RITArc 0545'. The level of description is set to 'Collection' and the resource type is 'Records'. The 'Publish?' checkbox is checked. The 'Restrictions Apply?' checkbox is unchecked. The 'Repository Processing Note' field is empty. The 'Languages' section is visible at the bottom with 'Add Language' and 'Add Language Note' buttons. The left sidebar contains a navigation menu with various tabs like 'Languages', 'Dates', 'Extents', etc., each with a small blue circle containing a number. The top navigation bar includes 'Browse', 'Create', and 'Search All Records'.

### C. Add information to Resource Record

1. Link Accession to Resource record
  - i. From Resource record, scroll down or use left menu bar to go to Related Accessions
  - ii. Click on “Add Related Accession”
  - iii. Either enter Accession ID if known, or use Browse to find Accession record and click “Link to Accessions”
  - iv. Click “Save Resource”
2. Link existing Agents to Resource record [*\*see also “Create an Agent record” for Agents not already in ArchivesSpace database\** ]
  - i. From Resource record, scroll down or use left menu bar to go to Agent Links
  - ii. Click on “Add Agent Link”
  - iii. From dropdown, select Role [Creator, Source, or Subject]
  - iv. Either enter Agent record name if known, or use Browse to find Agent record and click “Link to Agents”
  - v. Click on plus sign below Agent link to add another; repeat previous two steps until all Agents have been properly linked to Resource record
  - vi. Click “Save Resource”
3. Link existing Subjects to Resource record [*\*see also “Create a Subject record” for Subjects not already in ArchivesSpace database\**]
  - i. From Resource record, scroll down or use left menu bar to go to Subjects
  - ii. Click on “Add Subject”
  - iii. Either enter Subject record keyword(s) if known, or use Browse to find Subject record and click “Link to Subject”
  - iv. If needed, you can Create a Subject from this section too; just click dropdown and “Create” from Subject field.
  - v. Click on plus sign below Subject link to add another; repeat entry of subject terms until all Subjects have been properly linked to Resource record
  - vi. Click “Save Resource”
4. Add Finding Aid information to Resource record
  - i. Under “Finding Aid Data” section, enter:
    - Finding Aid Title (e.g., “Finding Aid to the Sidney Crosby Papers, 1987-2016”)
    - Finding Aid Date [date completed]
    - Finding Aid Author [person(s) who processed collection/did finding aid]
    - Description Rules > DACS
    - Finding Aid Status > Complete
  - ii. Click “Save Resource”
5. Add Notes to Resource record [*\*see also section on EAD tags\**]
  - i. From Resource record, scroll down or use left menu bar to go to Notes

- ii. Click on “Add Note”
  - iii. From dropdown, select appropriate Note type. For collections in RIT Archives, enter data for each of the following Notes:
    - Abstract
    - Conditions Governing Use
    - Custodial History
    - Preferred Citation [edit Label to “Preferred citation for publication”]
    - Processing Information [edit Label to “Processed by”]
    - Biographical/Historical [edit Label to either “Biographical Note” or “Historical Note”]
    - Scope and Contents [edit Label to “Collection Scope and Content Note”]
    - Arrangement [see also section on EAD tags for formatting outline; edit Label to “System of Arrangement”]
  - iv. Other relevant note types which may also be added include:
    - Relevant Materials
    - Conditions Governing Access
    - Separated Materials
    - General [use for other notes, edit Label appropriately (e.g., “Revision Description”)]
    - Language of Materials [use if there are languages in collection other than English; edit Label to “Language”]
  - v. Click on plus sign below Notes link to add another; repeat entry of note types and content until all Notes have been properly linked to Resource record. Be sure to check Publish for every Note.
  - vi. Click “Save Resource”
6. Create arrangement of series/subseries in Resource Record
- i. From top of Resource record, click on title of collection in tree view to select/highlight record
  - ii. Click on “Add Child” to create first series within collection
    - Field will show “\*Archival Object\*”
    - Scroll down to record and edit title [e.g., “Series I: Personal papers”]
    - Select appropriate dropdown for Level of Description [i.e., Series]
    - Check Publish
    - Enter date(s) [at Series level, should be inclusive range]
    - Click “Save Archival Object”
    - Note: If there are multiple records at same level [e.g., 5 series within the collection], you just can click the “+1” button next to the “Save Archival Object” button to generate the next Sibling record.



- iii. Repeat adding Children/Siblings for arrangement of collection in tree view [Series will be siblings of other series; subseries will be children of appropriate series, etc.]
  - iv. Add Scope and Content Note to each series and/or subseries by selecting each record from tree view; scroll down or use left menu bar to go to Notes. Click on Add Note and select Note Type [Scope and Content] from dropdown. [Edit Label to “Scope and Content Note”.] Enter content and save record.
7. Add Box and Folder listings using Rapid Data Entry [*\*These fields are not mixed content and will not accept EAD tags, italics, etc.\**]
- i. From top of Resource record, click on appropriate record in tree view [e.g., first series] to select/highlight record. Plan to only enter data for each record [e.g., you should not enter Subseries B and C instances under Subseries A].
  - ii. Click on “Rapid Data Entry”
  - iii. Click on “Apply an RDE Template,” select dropdown “Julia RDE template.”  
These columns will remain:
    - Basic Information - Level of Description
    - Basic Information - Publish?
    - Basic Information - Title
    - Instance - Instance Type
    - Instance – Top Container
    - Instance - Child Type
    - Instance - Child Indicator
  - iv. Note: There is also the option to can also customize the columns for a particular series or full collection.
  - v. Rapid Data Entry columns can be made sticky by clicking the label of each column so that it is highlighted blue; make sticky the Level of Description, Publish?, Instance type, Top Container, and Child Type. Container Indicator may be made sticky if needed.
  - vi. Enter first row of basic information: Level of Description [file], Publish? [check], Title [unique name of each folder], Instance type [Text, Graphic images, etc.], Top Container [usually Box #], Child Type [usually Folder or Object], and Child Indicator [#].
  - vii. To add multiple rows which will contain all the same sticky information as first row, click on arrow next to green Add Row button; enter appropriate number and then “Add Rows.” Rows will generate.
  - viii. Enter folder numbers by hand or by populating Child Indicator column; to fill column, click on Fill Column > Select Sequence > Column [dropdown: Instance-Child Indicator], Fill Value From (1) to (whatever #). Preview sequence values to make sure all added rows are being populated correctly. If okay, click blue “Apply Sequence” button.

- ix. Enter folder labels in Title field for each row. When finished, either add more rows or click “Save Rows.” You will be returned back to Resource record.

*Tree view of arrangement in Resource will look like this after Rapid Data Entry:*

Home / Resources / Empire State Association of the Deaf (ESAD) records			
Empire State Association of the Deaf (ESAD) records	Collection	Text, Text, Text, Text, Text, Text, ...	Box: 1 [R]
▶ Series I: ESAD historical information, 1867-2017	Series		
▼ Series II: Correspondence, 1936-2008	Series		
▶ Subseries A: Executive board chronological, 1936-2008	Sub-Series		
▶ Subseries B: Subject file correspondence, 1946-1990	Sub-Series		
▼ Series III: Legislation and political activism, 1880-2014	Series		
▶ Subseries A: Education, 1880-1999	Sub-Series		
▼ Subseries B: Interpretation, 1969-2006	Sub-Series		
Establishing R.I.D. [Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf] - reference, not...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
ESAD legislation - interpreter training, 1977-1979	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Advisory Committee on Deafne...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Blue Ribbon Interpreters - memos, fliers, and reference; 1987-1988	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Certification of Interpreters - reference, memos, fliers, and notes; 1987-1...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Developing and Supporting Legislative Issues of Interpreters - reference,...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Sign Instructors Guidance Network (SIGN) information - reference, mem...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Sign Instructors Guidance Network (SIGN) correspondence, 1988-1989	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]
Sign Instructors Guidance Network (SIGN) board minutes - reference, 19...	File	Text	Box: 16 [F]

- x. Repeat for each series/subseries until all instances are recorded in ArchivesSpace.
8. Add Top Container locations to Resource record
    - i. From main Resource record, go to Instance section [you should have an instance for each separate box or container]
    - ii. Click “Add Container Instance” button
    - iii. Under Type, select main type of materials from drop-down
    - iv. Under Top Container, type in Box #
      - v. If there are digital materials in collection, when pop-up appears select Container Type > “Object” and in field for indicator, enter “(digital)”
    - vi. In bottom left corner, click “Create and Link to Top Container”
    - vii. Save Resource record.
    - viii. If you have the required permission level: Click cog symbol above Components tree, select “Manage Top Containers”
    - ix. Under Resource, type in name of Resource record, select, and hit Search
      - x. Under Matching Results, find each specific Top Container and select Edit
      - xi. When record appears, click “Add Location” button
      - xii. Confirm current status and today’s date. Under Location, for physical materials, enter Range # and Shelf # in archives stacks, or appropriate Flat file # and Drawer #, or other location as indicated by an RIT Archives staff member.
      - xiii. Click “Save Top Container” and exit record.

**D. EXTRA: Create an Agent record** [for Agents not already in ArchivesSpace database]

1. On toolbar with home icon on main page, click on “Create” > “Agent”>appropriate type [Person, Family, or Corporate Entity]
2. For Person - all records:
  - i. Check Publish
  - ii. Source [database or Local Sources]
  - iii. Rules [DACS]
  - iv. Name Order [Indirect]
  - v. Primary Part of Name [person’s last name]
  - vi. Rest of Name [person’s first name, middle initial, and/or nickname]
  - vii. Additional fields can receive data where appropriate [e.g., name use dates, notes, related agents]
3. For Family - all records:
  - i. Check Publish
  - ii. Source [database or Local Sources]
  - iii. Rules [DACS]
  - iv. Family Name [last name (e.g., “Ellingson”)]
  - v. Additional fields can receive data where appropriate [e.g., family name use dates, notes, related agents]
4. For Corporate Entity - all records:
  - i. Check Publish
  - ii. Source [database or Local Sources]
  - iii. Rules [DACS]
  - iv. Primary Part of Name [corporate name (e.g., “Bertie Botts’ Candy Co.”)]
  - v. Additional fields can receive data where appropriate [e.g., family name use dates, notes, related agents]
5. When finished entering data for each Agent, click on “Save” to close out of creating Agent records, or click on “+1” to save record and create new record of that type.

**E. EXTRA: Create a Subject record** [for Subjects not already in ArchivesSpace database]

1. On toolbar with home icon on main page, click on “Create” > “Subject”
2. For Subjects - all records:
  - i. Source [LCSH, local sources, or other database]
  - ii. Term [subject (e.g., “Wizards”)]
  - iii. Type [topical, genre/form, etc.]
3. For Subjects with subdivisions [e.g., “Wizards--England”], Enter first Term and Type, then click on plus sign or “Add Term/Subdivision” to create next subdivision field.
4. When finished entering data for each Subject, click on “Save” to close out of creating Subject records, or click on “+1” to save record and create next Subject record.

**F. EXTRA: Use Collection Management section**

1. On toolbar with home icon on main page, click on “Browse” > “Collection Management”
2. All Accession records in ArchivesSpace should have had Collection Management metadata entered (i.e., priority and processing status).
3. From Collection Management screen, you can sort by clicking on column headings (e.g., “Priority” or “Processing Status”).
4. Left-hand column will list tags so that you can also browse by just clicking on the Priority or Status.

**G. EXTRA: Use EAD tags for markup in mixed content Note fields**

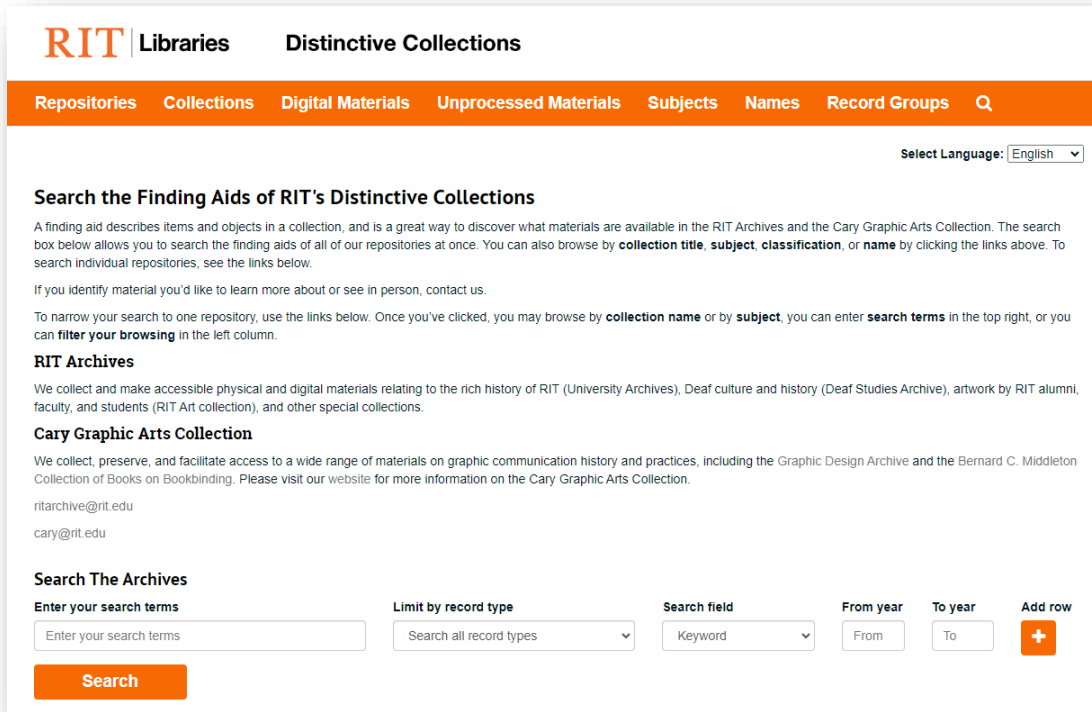
1. To italicize text [such as for video game, movie, or book titles] in mixed content Note fields, use the opening tag `<emph render="italic">` and close with `</emph>`. **\*\*Important:** In fields, quotation marks should be straight quotes [like this "." ] and not smart quotes [like this “.”].
  - i. Example text without tags:
    - Julie Andrews, star of The Sound of Music, also wrote the children’s book Mandy.
  - ii. Example text with tags inserted:
    - Julie Andrews, star of `<emph render="italic">` The Sound of Music`</emph>`, also wrote the children’s book `<emph render="italic">` Mandy`</emph>`.
  - iii. Example text will appear published as:
    - Julie Andrews, star of *The Sound of Music*, also wrote the children’s book *Mandy*.
2. Bold and underlined emphasis text can be created by using same format.
  - i. Bold text: `<emph render="bold"></emph>`
  - ii. Underlined text: `<emph render="underline"></emph>`
3. EAD notes that the `<emph render=>` attributes are limited to:
  - `altrender`, `bold`, `bolddoublequote`, `bolditalic`, `boldsinglequote`, `boldsmcaps`, `boldunderline`, `doublequote`, `italic`, `nonproport`, `singlequote`, `smcaps`, `sub`, `super`, `underline`
4. To add external link within a note field, highlight/wrap text in tag `<extref>`. After opening tag, enter `<a href="http://whateverwebsitesitelink.com">`. Before end tag `</extref>`, enter `</a>`.
  - i. Example text without tags:

- See also the Cary Graphic Arts Collection website.
- ii. Example text with tags inserted:
    - See also the `<extref><a href="https://www.rit.edu/carycollection/"> Cary Graphic Arts Collection website</a></extref>`.
  - iii. Example text will appear published as:
    - See also the [Cary Graphic Arts Collection website](https://www.rit.edu/carycollection/).
5. To format System of Arrangement note field to display outline in published view, use opening/closed pair of tags `<p></p>` to add hard return after a line, and use list tags [`<ul, li, /ul, /li>`] to indent a Subseries or Sub-subseries in the outline.
- i. Example text copy/pasted from finding aid:
    - Series II: Website content, 2016-2024
      - Subseries A: Images, 2016
      - Subseries B: Topics, 2016
      - Subseries C: Further information, 2016-2022
      - Subseries D: Archived website, 2024
    - Series III: Historical content, 1971-2016
  - ii. Example should have tags entered like this:
    - `<p>Series II: Website content, 2016-2014</p>`  
`<ul style="list-style:none">`  
`<li>Subseries A: Images, 2016</li>`  
`<li>Subseries B: Topics, 2016</li>`  
`<li>Subseries C: Further information, 2016</li>`  
`<li>Subseries D: Archived website, 2024</li>`  
`</ul>`  
`<p>Series III: Historical content, 1971-2016</p>`
    - iii. Example text with tags will appear published as:

```
Series II: Website content, 2016-2024
  Subseries A: Images, 2016
  Subseries B: Topics, 2016
  Subseries C: Further information, 2016
  Subseries D: Archived website, 2024
Series III: Historical content, 1971-2016
```

## Using ArchivesSpace - Public module

1. Access the ArchivesSpace public module at: <https://archivesspace.rit.edu/>.
2. Use search bar to search for specific keywords.
3. Browse by clicking on Collections, Subjects, Names, or Record Groups.



## Appendices

### Appendix A: Additional Resources

#### Description - Content Standard

- *Describing Archives: A Content Standard, DACS 2019.0.3*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2020. Available in hard copy or online at [https://files.archivists.org/pubs/DACS\\_2019.0.3\\_Version.pdf](https://files.archivists.org/pubs/DACS_2019.0.3_Version.pdf).

#### Description - Controlled Vocabularies

- Association of College and Research Libraries, Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS). *Controlled Vocabularies for Use in Rare Book and Special Collections Cataloging*. [http://www.rbms.info/committees/bibliographic\\_standards/controlled\\_vocabularies/index.shtml](http://www.rbms.info/committees/bibliographic_standards/controlled_vocabularies/index.shtml)
- Getty Research Institute. *Art & Architecture Thesaurus Online (AAT)*. <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/aat/index.html>
- Getty Research Institute. *Union List of Artist Names (ULAN)*. <http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/index.html>
- Library of Congress. *Library of Congress Linked Data Service - Authorities and Vocabularies*. <http://id.loc.gov/>
- Library of Congress. *Library of Congress – Name Authority File (LCNAF)*. <https://id.loc.gov/authorities/names.html>
- Society of American Archivists. *Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology*. <http://www2.archivists.org/glossary/>

#### Preservation

- Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation. *Conservation Online*. <http://cool.conservation-us.org/>
- National Archives and Records Administration. *Preservation and Archives Professionals*. <http://www.archives.gov/preservation/>
- National Parks Service. *Conserve O Grams*. [http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/consveogram/cons\\_toc.html](http://www.nps.gov/museum/publications/consveogram/cons_toc.html)
- Northeast Document Conservation Center. *NEDCC Preservation Leaflets*. <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/overview>

#### Processing

- Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. “Linear Footage Calculator.” <https://beinecke.library.yale.edu/research-teaching/doing-research-beinecke/linear-footage-calculator>
- Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library. “2.5.2 Rates of Processing.” <https://msu-processing-manual.beinecke.library.yale.edu/252-rates-processing>

## Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

**Accession:** Materials physically and legally transferred to a repository as a unit at a single time; an acquisition.

**Accretion:** An acquisition added to an existing series or collection.

**Appraisal:** The process of determining whether records and other materials have permanent (archival) value. Appraisal may be done at the collection, creator, series, file, or item level. Appraisal can take place prior to donation and prior to physical transfer, at or after accessioning.

**ArchivesSpace:** An open source, web application for managing archives information. The application is designed to support core functions in archives administration such as accessioning; description and arrangement of processed materials including analog, hybrid, and born-digital content; management of authorities (agents and subjects) and rights; and reference service. The application supports collection management through collection management records, tracking of events, and administrative reports. The application also functions as a metadata authoring tool, enabling the generation of EAD, MARCXML, MODS, Dublin Core, and METS formatted data.

**Arrangement:** The organization and sequence of items within a collection. Arrangement is often combined with the process of rehousing materials into archival containers and folders, and includes the labeling and shelving of materials.

**Collection:** A group of “materials assembled by a person, organization, or repository from a variety of sources,” created *artificially*.

**Container list:** A detailed inventory of a collection. A collection may be described at the box level, folder level, and rarely, at the item level.

**Conservation:** Counters existing damage to materials. The repair or stabilization of materials through chemical or physical treatment to ensure that they survive in their original form as long as possible.

**Content:** The intellectual substance of a document, including text, data, symbols, numerals, images, and sound. Along with context and structure, one of the three fundamental aspects of a record.

**Context:** The organizational, functional, and operational circumstances surrounding materials' creation, receipt, storage, or use, and its relationship to other materials. The circumstances that a user may bring to a document that influences that user's understanding of the document. Along with content and structure, one of the three fundamental aspects of a record.

**DACS:** *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* is the data content standard that guides Archivists through all the levels of description in processing: administrative, biographical/historical, collection-level, folder-level, and item-level. It was developed from the General International Standard Archival Description, Second Edition (ISAD(G)), and replaced the *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (APPM) standard.



**Deed of gift:** A legal agreement transferring title to an archival resource from a donor without the exchange of money. Typically a contract that establishes conditions governing the transfer of title to archival resources, identifying application of intellectual property (if necessary), and specifying any restrictions on access and use.

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

**EAD:** Encoded Archival Description is the data structure standard for encoding electronic versions of archival inventories and registers. It defines the structural elements of a finding aid and their interrelationships. EAD does for archival inventories and registers what MARC does for catalog records. The EAD standard is embodied in a Document Type Definition (DTD) that conforms to the syntax of Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML). An EAD output should be wrapped in an XSLT style sheet to display an EAD finding aid online.

**Ephemera:** Materials, typically printed documents, created for a specific, limited purpose, generally designed to be discarded after use. (Examples: trade cards, greeting cards, buttons)

**Finding aid:** A tool that facilitates discovery of information within a collection of records. Also, a description of records that gives the repository physical and intellectual control over the materials and that assists users to gain access to and understand the materials. Finding aids typically consist of descriptive elements and a container list; however, basic inventories or guides can also serve as finding aids.

**Fonds:** The entire body of records of an organization, family, or individual that have been created and accumulated as the result of an organic process reflecting the functions of the creator. Personal papers and organizational archives fit within this category.

**Hierarchical description:** 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).

**MARC:** MACHine-Readable Cataloging. MARC is the data structure standard for storing bibliographic information. Every piece of information corresponds to a numerically-coded field. Archival collections that are fully described with online finding aids should also have a collection-level MARC record, making it discoverable through the library catalog and databases such as WorldCat.

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

**Papers:** A term used “generically to encompass materials in a variety of formats, including manuscripts, typescripts, clippings, photographs.” The term typically connotes materials that are associated with an individual or family.

**Processing:** The arrangement, description, and housing of archival materials for storage and use by patrons.

**Provenance:** tells the history of ownership. It refers to the origin of an item or collection, identifying the original owner or creator, as well as subsequent owners and creators.

**Realia:** A three-dimensional object (not to be confused with ephemera). Examples include clothing, award plaques, and trophies.

**Record group:** A collection of records that share the same provenance and are of a convenient size for administration. A record group is a hierarchical division that is sometimes equivalent to provenance, representing all the records of an agency and its subordinate divisions. However, the records of a large agency may be broken into several record groups, treating the records of different divisions as separate collections rather than as a series.

**Structure:** The manner in which elements are organized, interrelated, and displayed. Along with content and context, one of the three fundamental aspects of a record.

**Transfer:** The process of moving records as part of their scheduled disposition, especially from an office or department to a records repository/archives. This may involve a change in custody without a change in title.

**XSL (eXtensible Stylesheet Language):** A standard to indicate how an Extensible Markup Language (XML) document is to be formatted for user display. XSL differs from Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) in two main areas. XSL cannot be used with Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) documents, and XSL has the ability to use Extensible Stylesheet Language Transforms (XSLT) to change an XML document to another XML document with a different structure.

**XSLT (eXtensible Stylesheet Language Transforms):** A metalanguage that describes rules to convert an XML document with one set of tags to a different XML document with different tags, effectively changing the structure of the document. Used with EAD output to display an EAD-encoded finding aid as a web page.

*This RIT Archives Processing Manual was drafted by Digital Archivist Julia Novakovic in Fall 2023.*

*Revision in September 2024 includes edit to adding indents/list tags to System of Arrangement Note on page 27-- thanks to student employee Elly Medcalf for problem-solving that tag issue.*