



"pile as archive" by magnusdigity
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THE POWER OF APPRAISAL: SELECTING ARCHIVES

RUTH E. BRYAN, PRESENTER; MATT GORZALSKI, MODERATOR

Introductions

- Ruth E. Bryan, CA (she/her)
- University Archivist, University of Kentucky
- Previously Archives Program Manager, Ruth Mott Foundation/Applewood; Head, Processing and Encoding, Duke University Rubenstein Library



Photo: Crystal Heis



Agenda

- What is archival appraisal/selection?
- Factors influencing appraisal decisions
 - Potential historical or enduring value balanced with →
 - Costs to preserve and provide access
 - Type of repository and its documentary mission
- Criteria to use in appraisal/selection
- Q&A on lecture content
- Practicing selection with case studies
- Discussion and Q&A on case studies



Reassurance!

- No absolutes
- American archival appraisal allows for flexibility and variability
- You've got this!



Appraisal



<https://dictionary.archivists.org/>

- Definition of appraisal
 - Identifying permanent or archival value
 - Determining retention period
 - Determining market/monetary value



Appraisal or Selection?

- Appraisal = archival function
- Selection = process of identifying enduring value

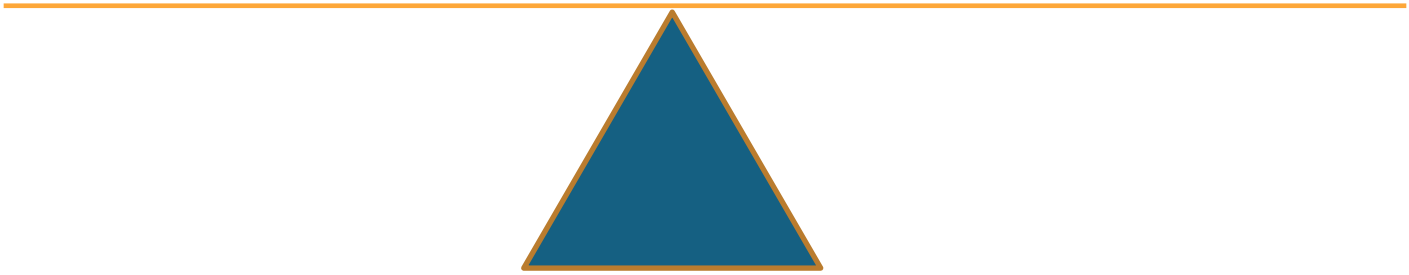


Appraisal or Selection?

- Appraisal = archival function
- Selection = process of identifying enduring value

Permanent/enduring value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal/Selection



Archives are:

Archives are:

- A place



Photo: UK Public Relations



Archives are:

- A place
- An organization

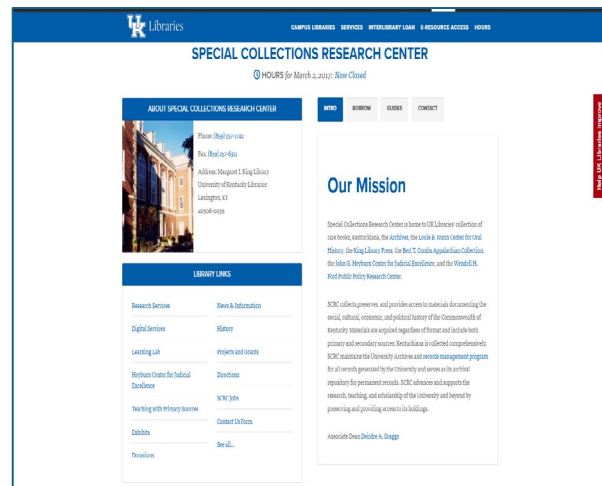


Photo: UK Public Relations



Photo: Crystal Heis

Archives are:

- A place
- An organization
- A profession

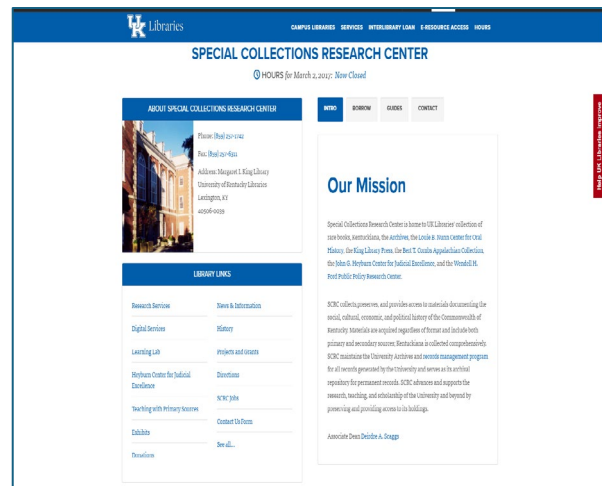


Photo: UK Public Relations



Photo: Crystal Heis

Archives are:

- A place
- An organization
- A profession
- Stuff of history

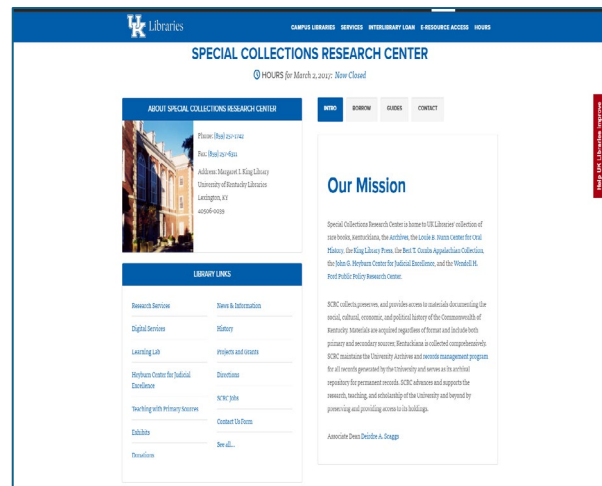
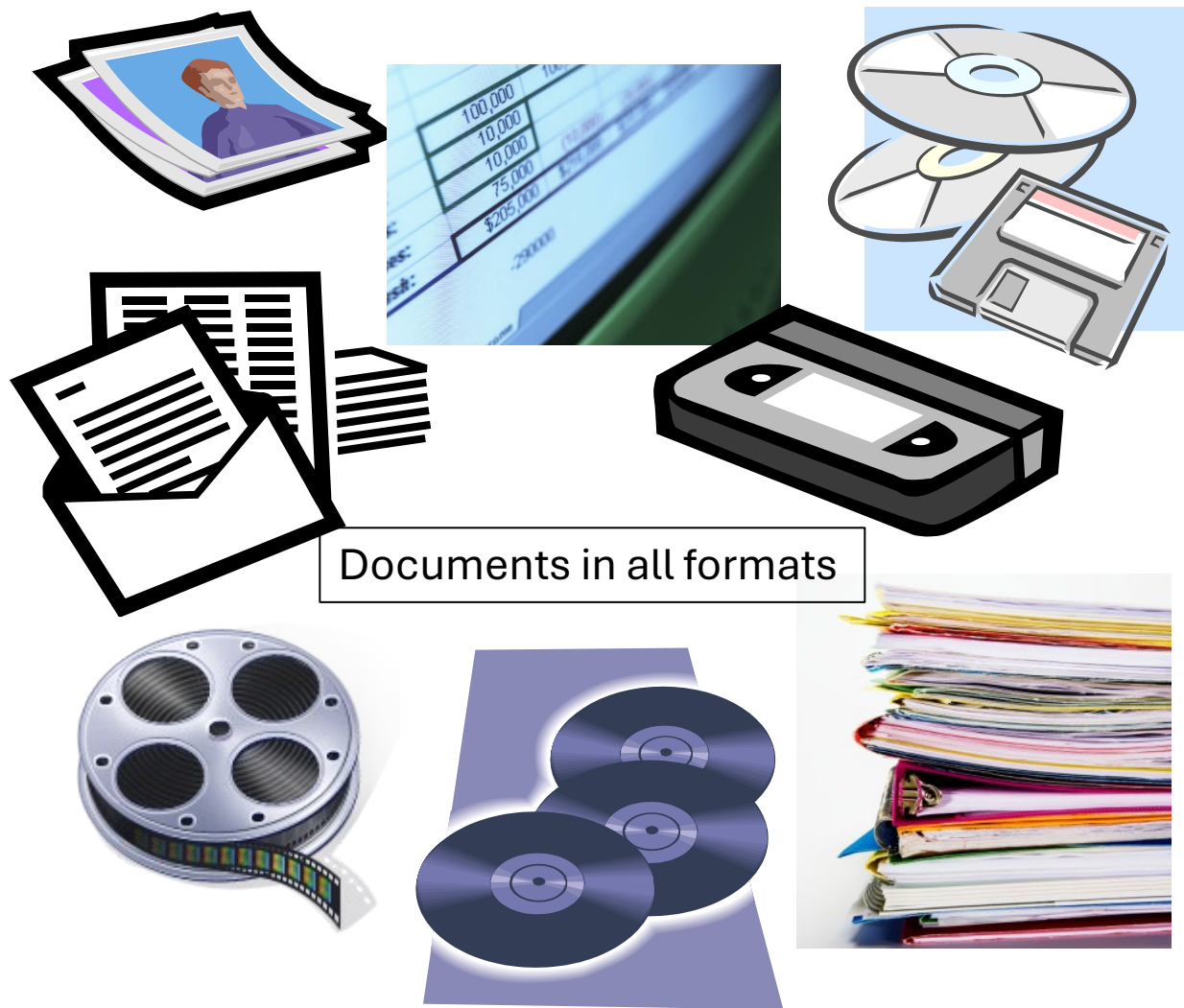


Photo: UK Public Relations

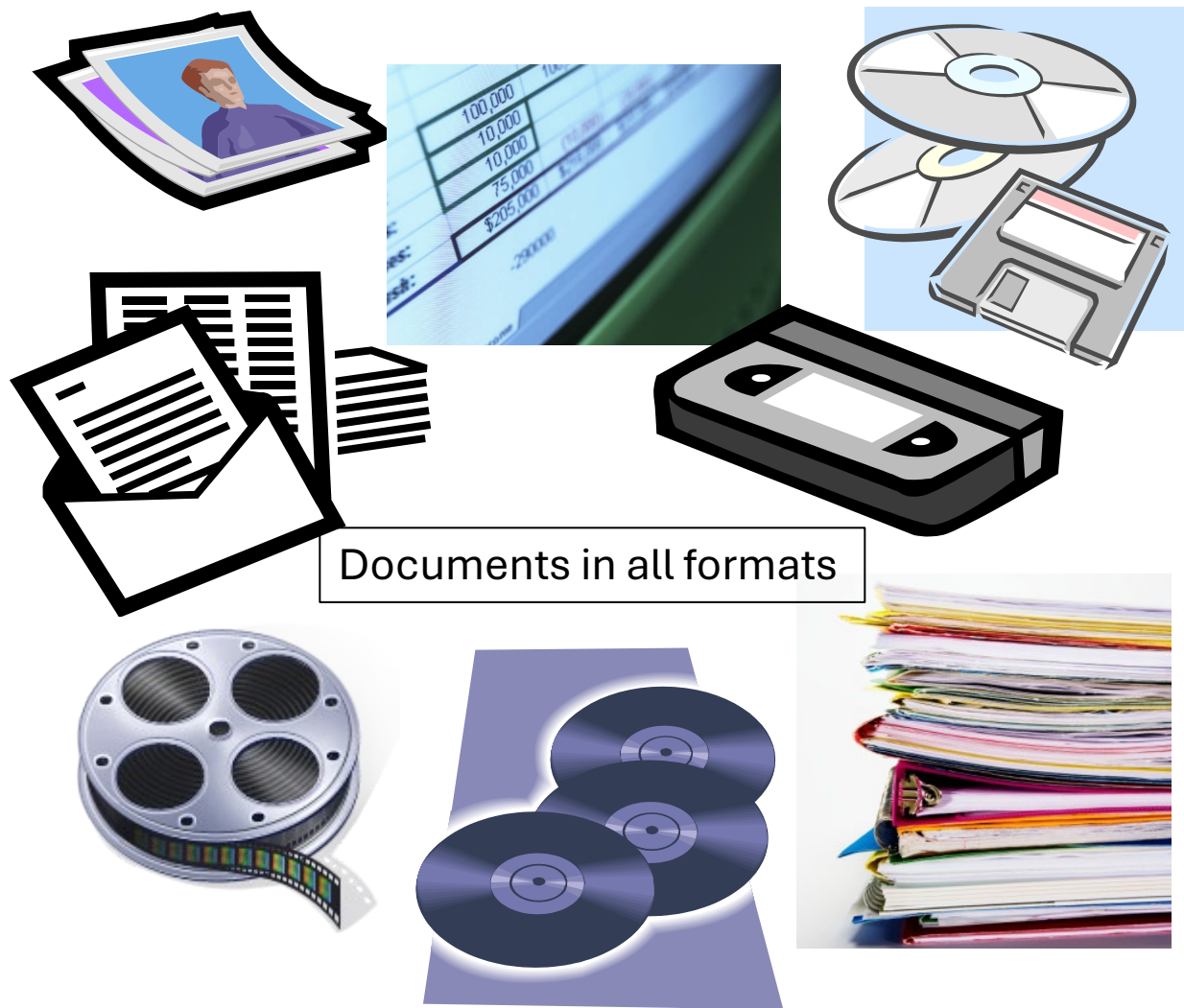


Photo: Crystal Heis

The Stuff of History



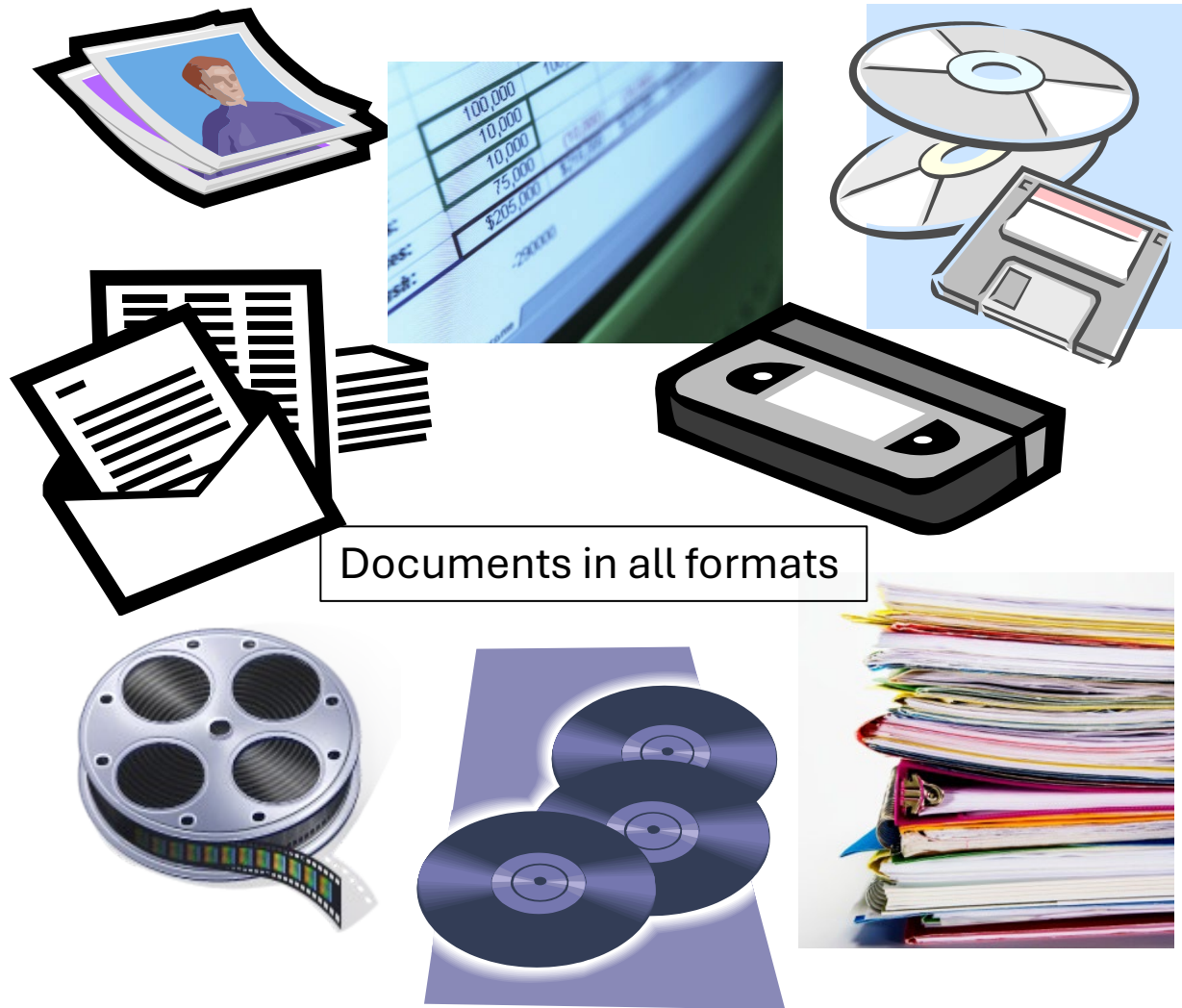
The Stuff of History



Documents in all formats

Records = documents
created by organizations

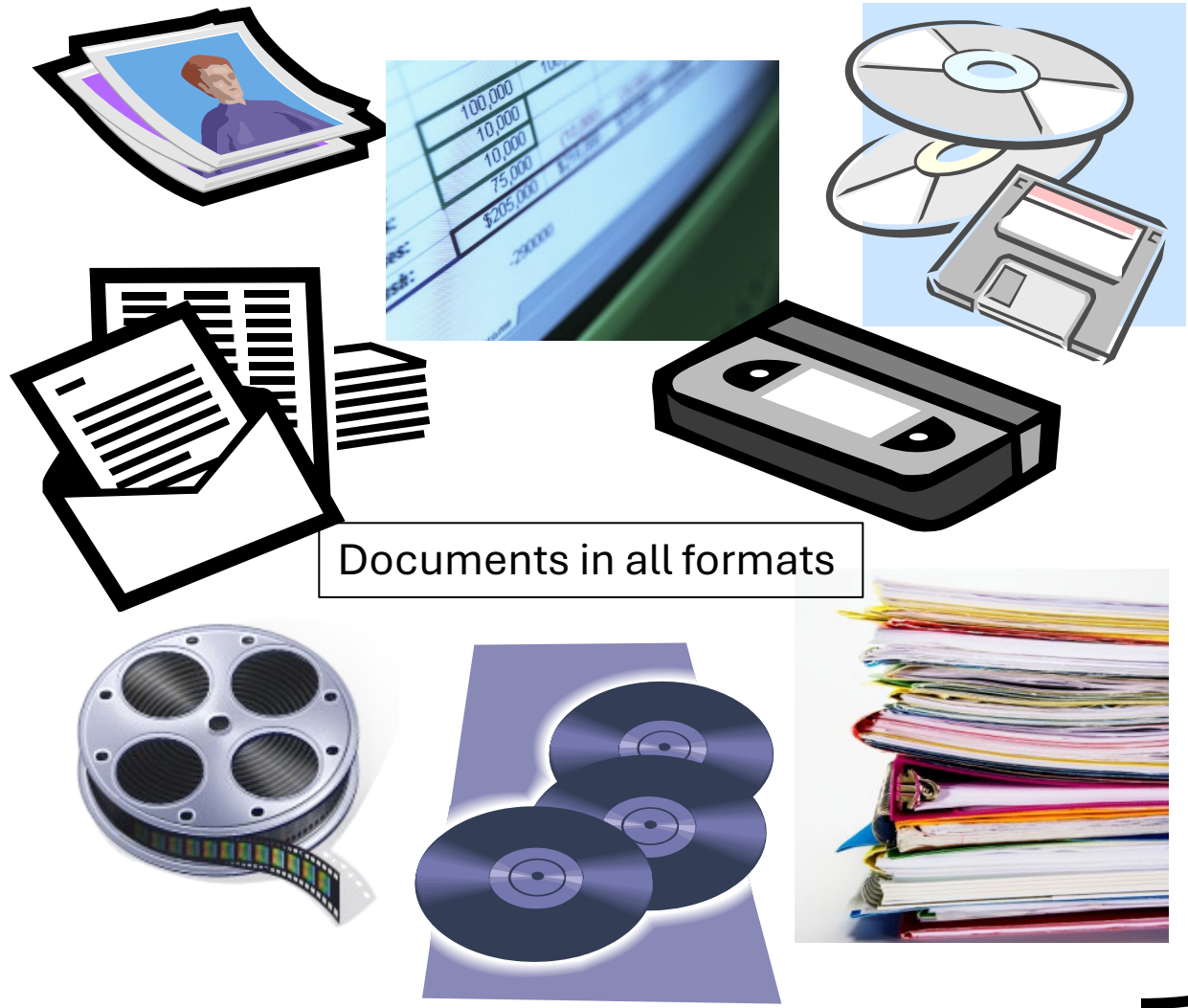
The Stuff of History



Records = documents
created by organizations

Papers = documents
created by individuals
and families

The Stuff of History



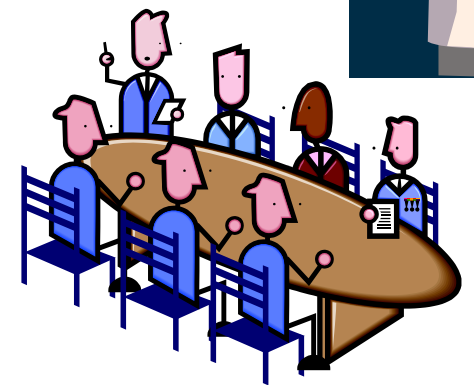
Documents in all formats

Created or come from

For a primary purpose

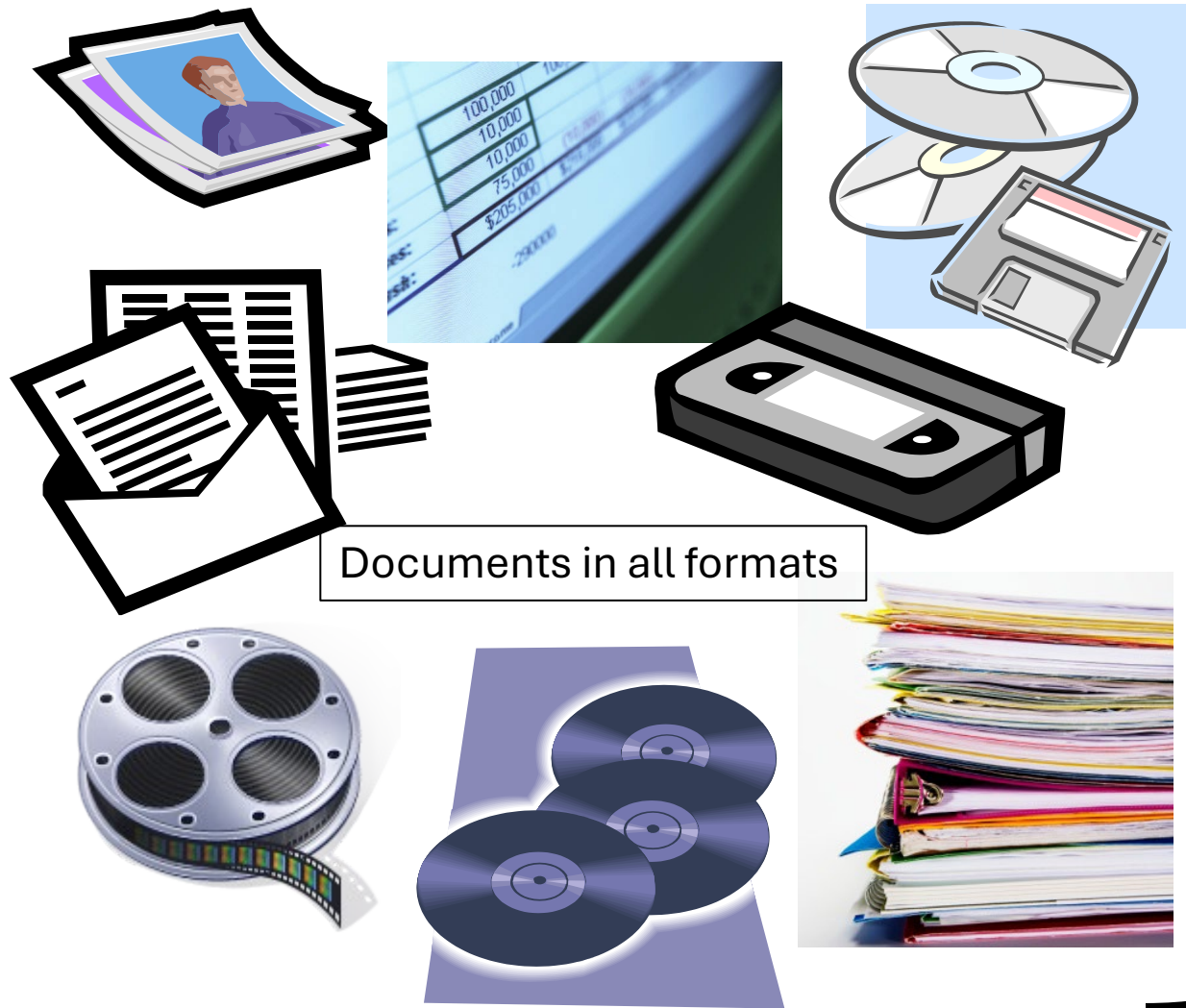
Families

Individuals



Organizations

The Stuff of History



Created or come from

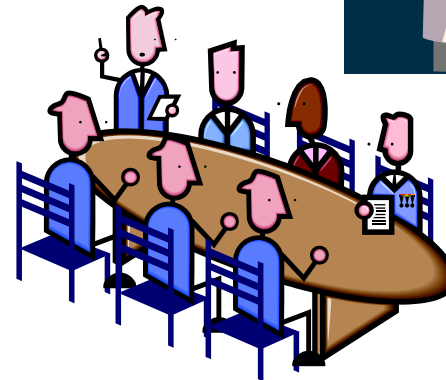
For a primary purpose

Families

Individuals



Appraisal

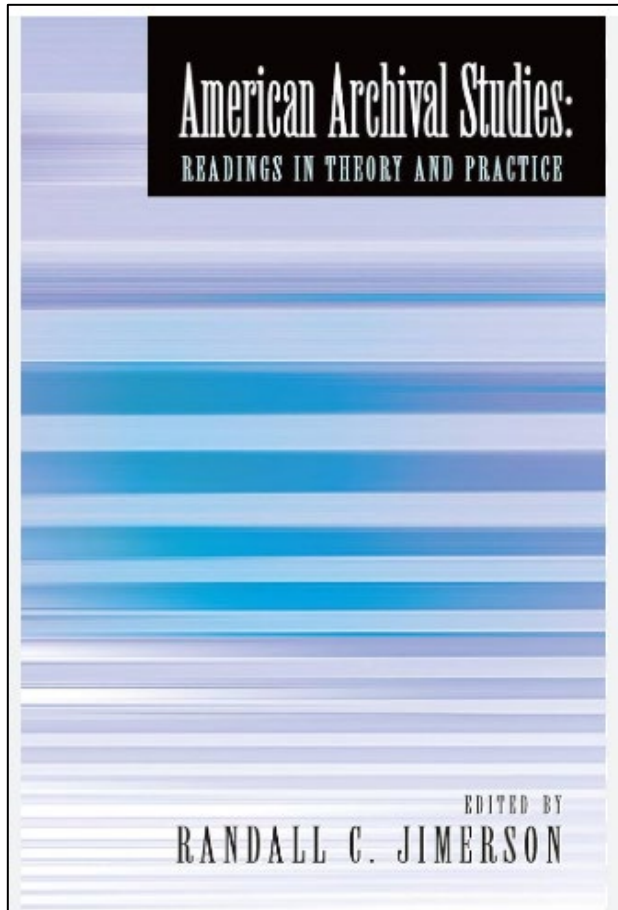


Organizations

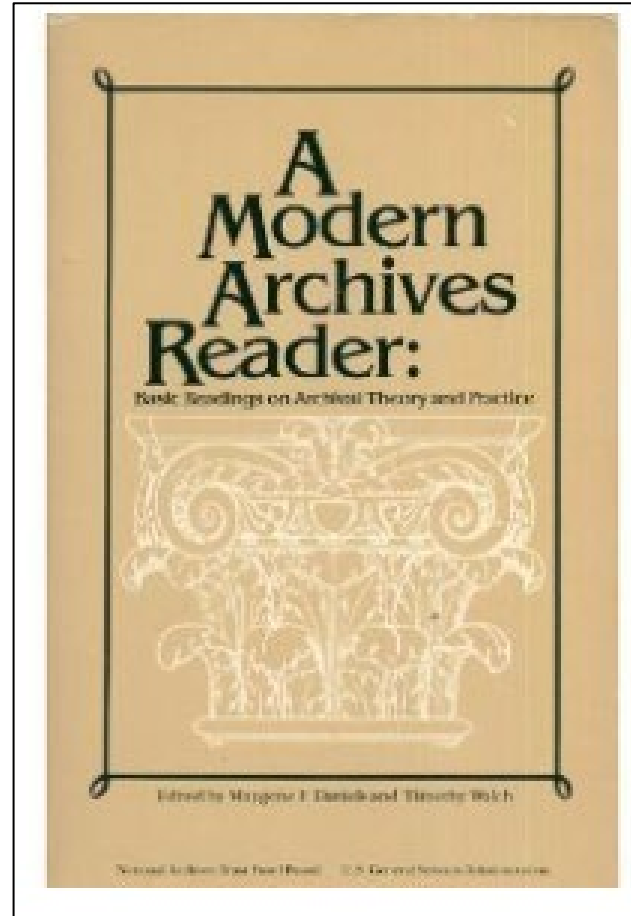
Historical/
Enduring/
Permanent
Value

Secondary purpose

American archival appraisal



American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice, 2000.



A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice, 1984.

Promoting the value and diversity of archives and archivists.

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HOME » GROUPS » ACCESSIONING, ACQUISITIONS, & APPRAISAL SECTION

Accessioning, Acquisitions, & Appraisal Section

Steering Committee Roster

The Section provides a forum for discussion of issues and interests pertaining to the acquisition and appraisal of public records, private papers, and other archival or manuscript collections.

Please note that this page is undergoing revisions. You might encounter outdated information that is in the process of being updated.

News & Announcements

[Accessioning, Acquisitions and Appraisal Section Annual Report, 2023-24](#)

[2024 Election: Candidate Statements](#)

[Nominations Open for 2024/2025 Section Leadership Positions - Nominations Due May 25](#)

Are you looking for a meaningful way to engage with your field, support other archivists, and connect with colleagues without adding a major time commitment to your calendar? This is the opportunity you've been looking for!

SECTION DOCUMENTS

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- [Section Leadership](#)
- [Section Standing Rules](#)
- [Reports](#)
- [Meeting Minutes and Agendas](#)
- [Newsletters](#)
- [Election Information](#)

RESOURCES

- [Collection Development Resources](#)
- [Bibliography](#)
- [Abandoned Property Laws](#)
- [Monetary Appraisal of Archival Documents](#)

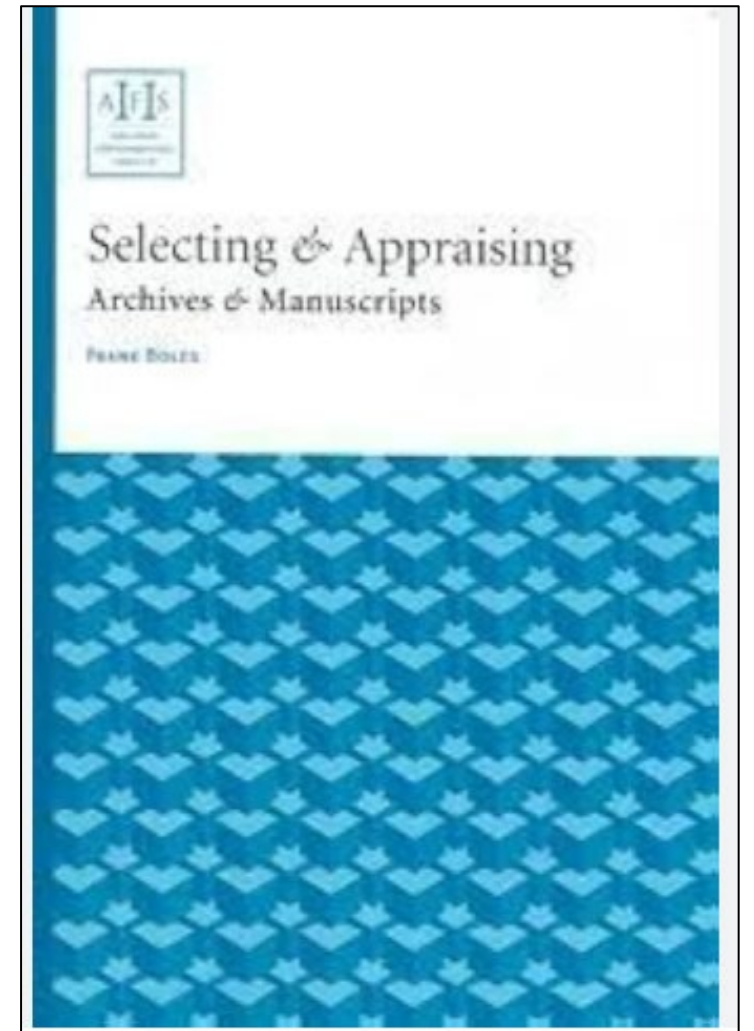
SOCIAL MEDIA

- [A&A Facebook Page](#)
- [A&A Blog](#)
- [A&A Twitter](#)

SAA Accessioning, Acquisitions, and Appraisal section:
<https://www2.archivists.org/groups/accessioning-acquisitions-appraisal-section>

Framework for this webinar

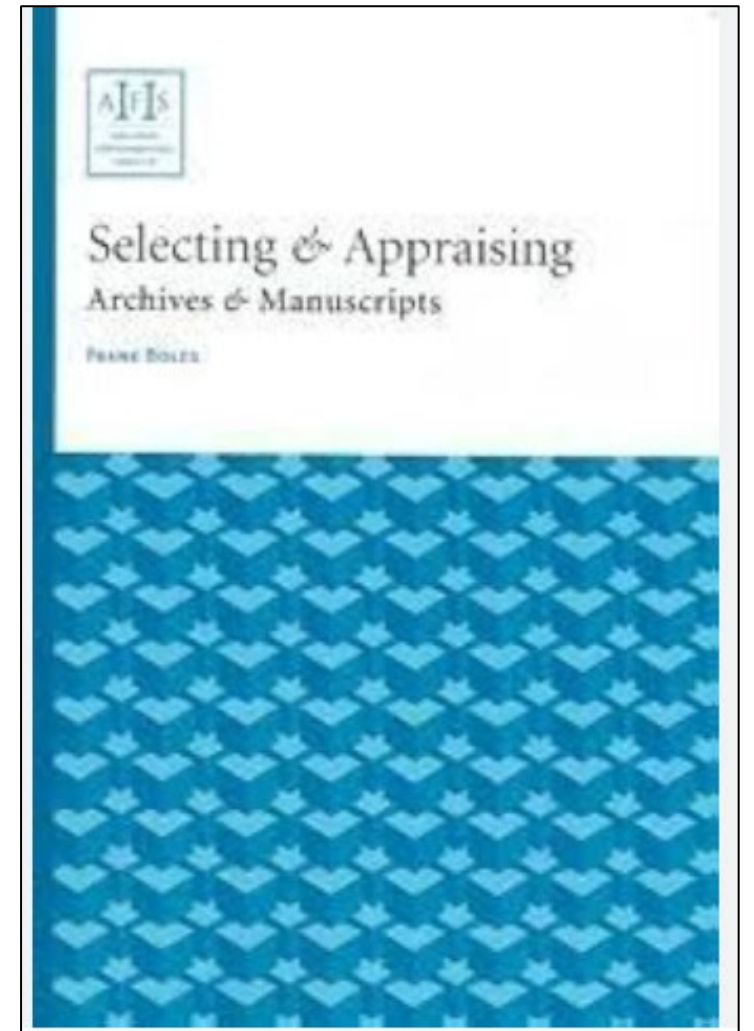
- “Big tent” philosophy (Frank Boles)
 - General appraisal criteria, factors and questions
 - Answers vary depending on the context



*Selecting and Appraising
Archives and Manuscripts, 2005.*

Framework for this webinar

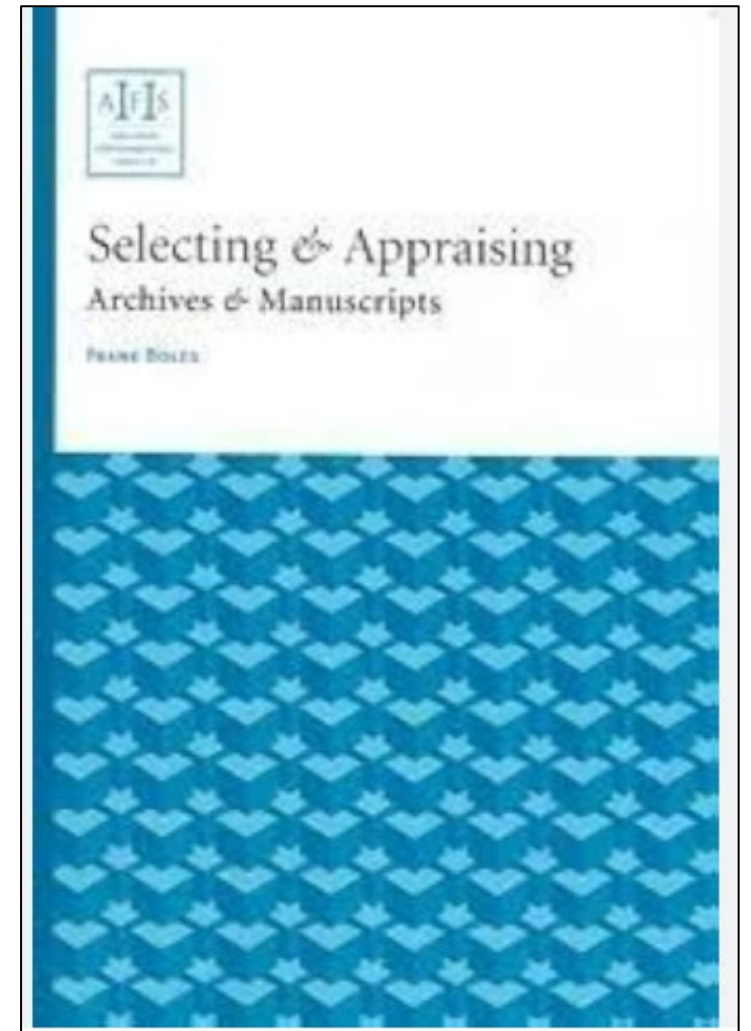
- “Big tent” philosophy (Frank Boles)
 - General appraisal criteria, factors and questions
 - Answers vary depending on the context
- Appraisal takes place throughout a collection or record group’s existence



Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts, 2005.

Framework for this webinar

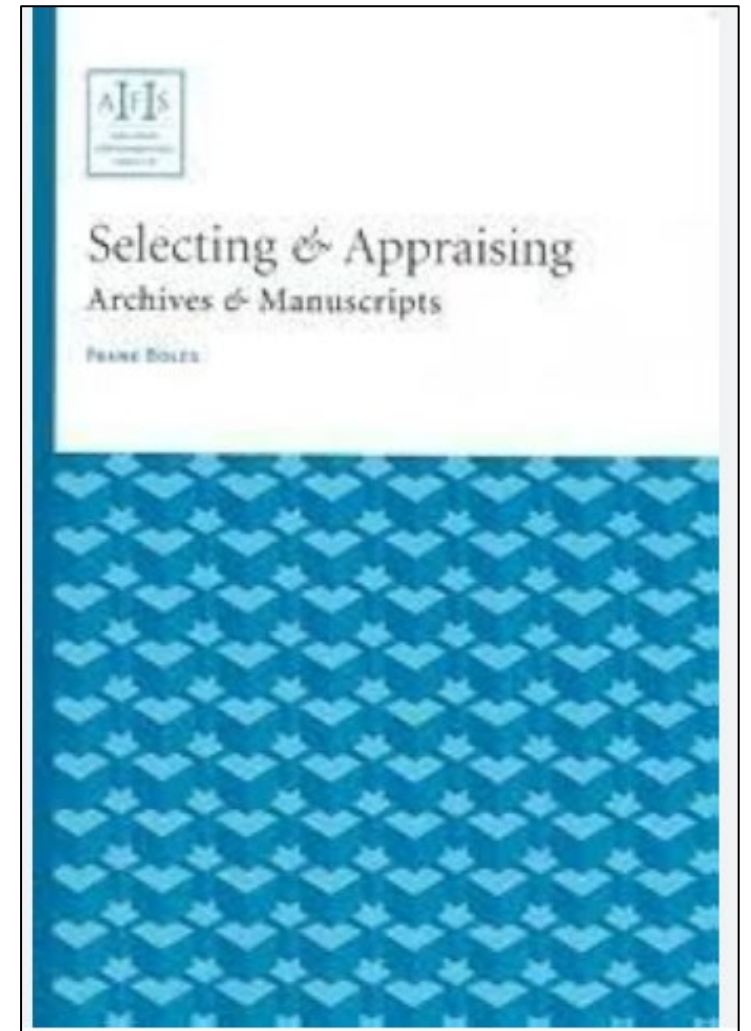
- “Big tent” philosophy (Frank Boles)
 - General appraisal criteria, factors and questions
 - Answers vary depending on the context
- Appraisal takes place throughout a collection or record group’s existence
- What to call sets of archival documents?
 - Provenance refers to “the individual, family, or organization that created or received the items” in a set of documents



Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts, 2005.

Framework for this webinar

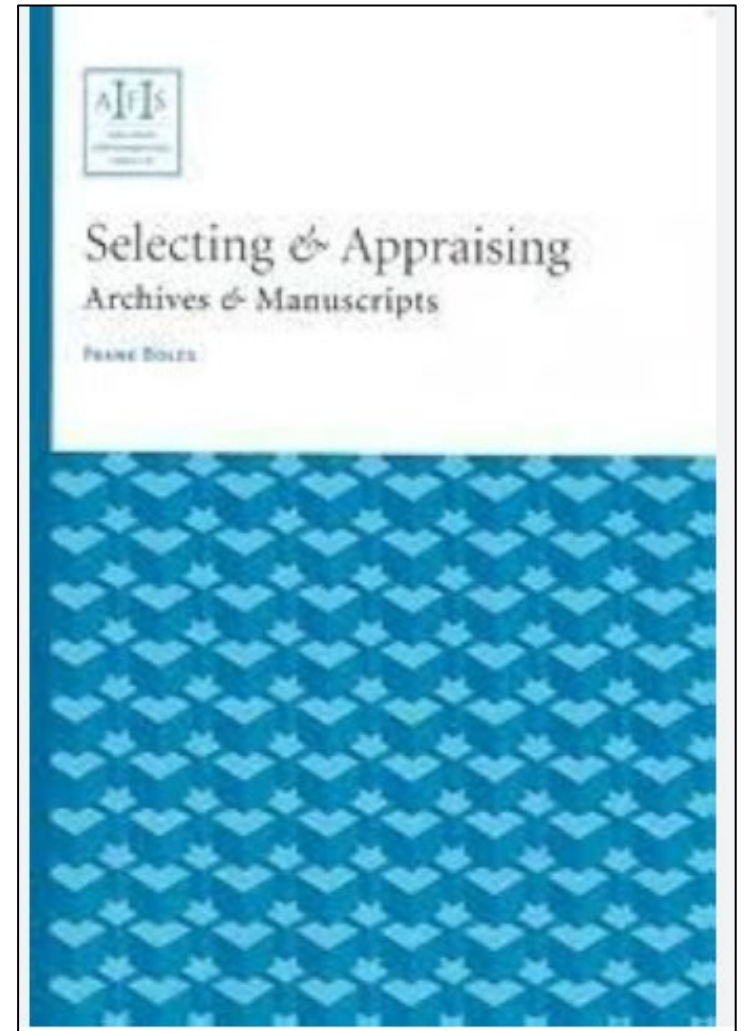
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Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts, 2005.

Framework for this webinar

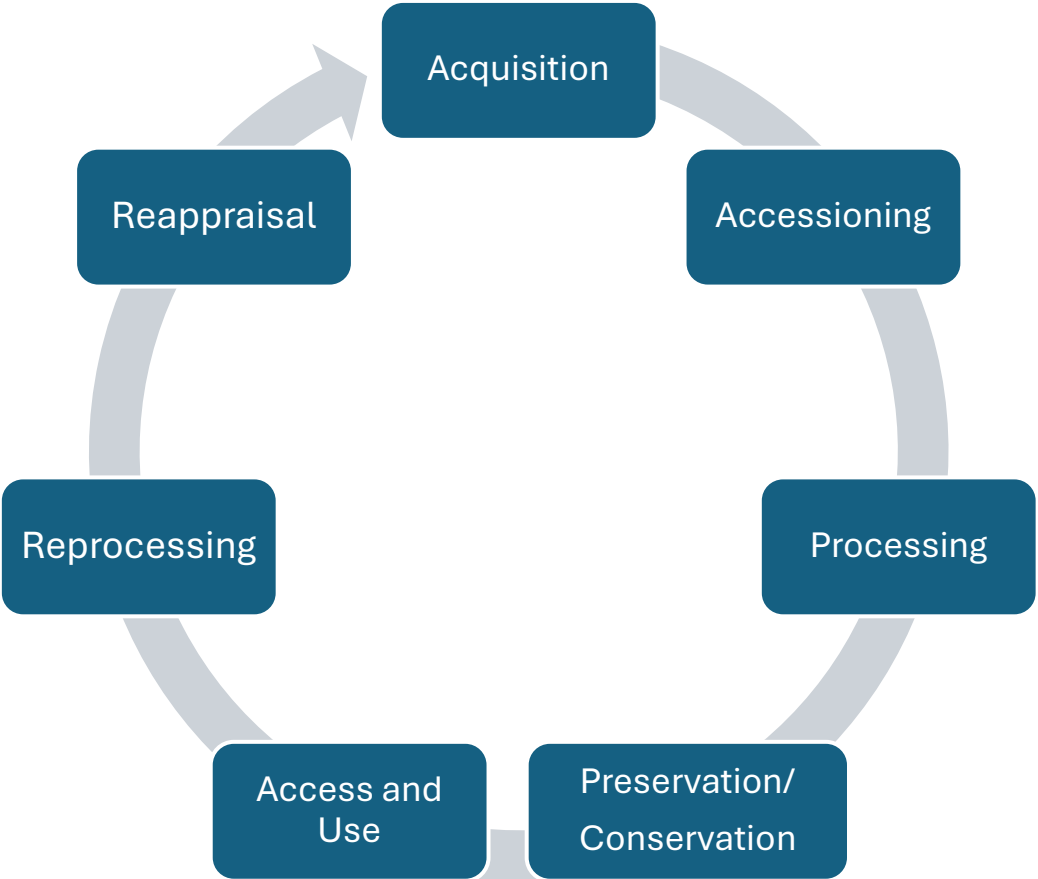
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 - General appraisal criteria, factors and questions
 - Answers vary depending on the context
- Appraisal takes place throughout a collection or record group’s existence
- What to call sets of archival documents?
 - ~~Fonds: “the entire body of records of an organization, family, or individuals”~~
 - Collection: “a set of archival or (more commonly) manuscript materials.”



Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts, 2005.

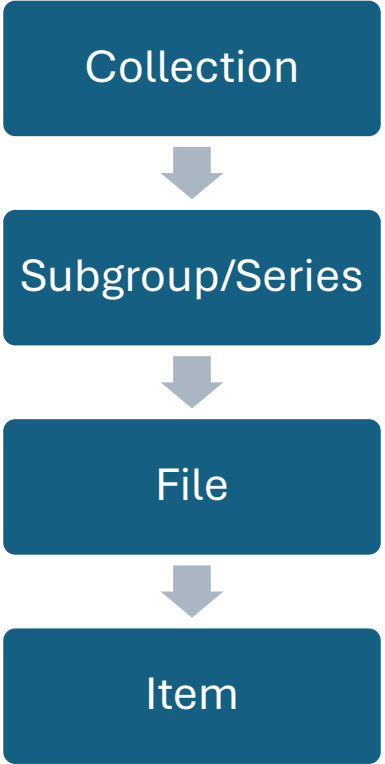
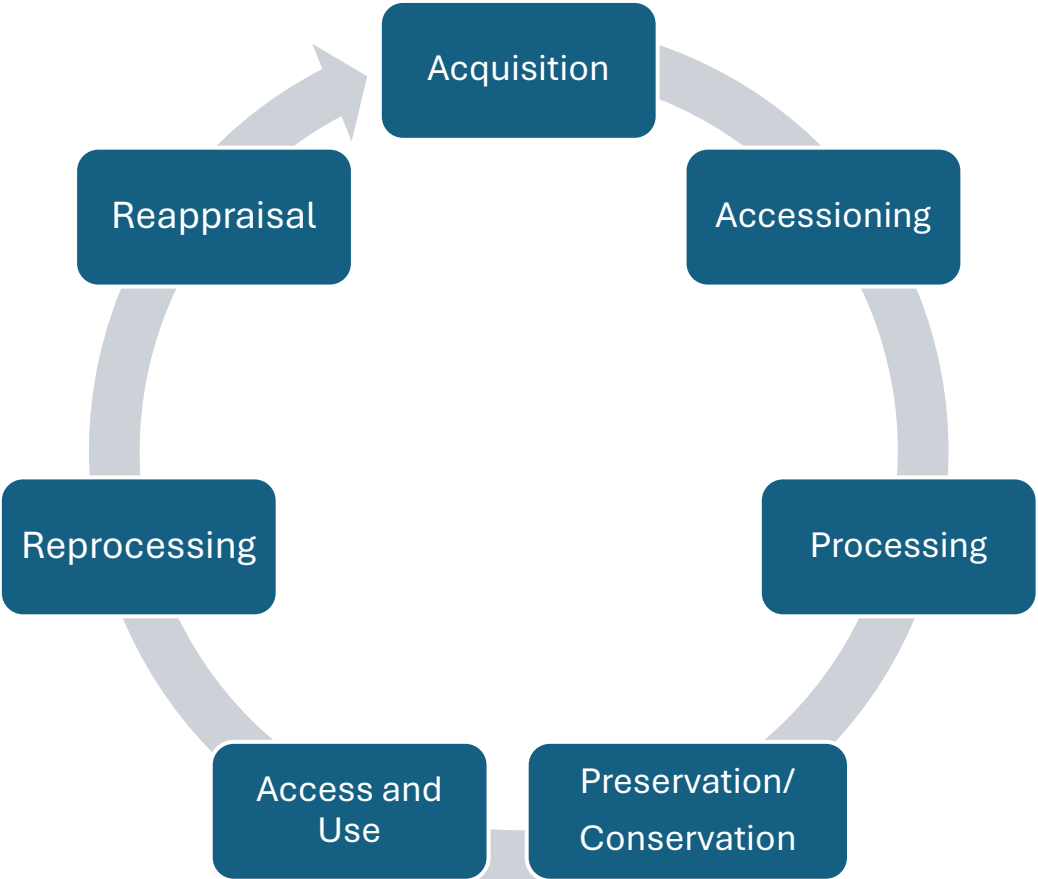


Where appraisal takes place





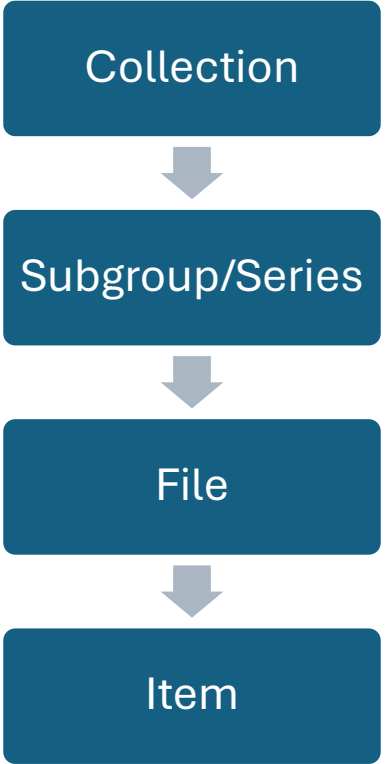
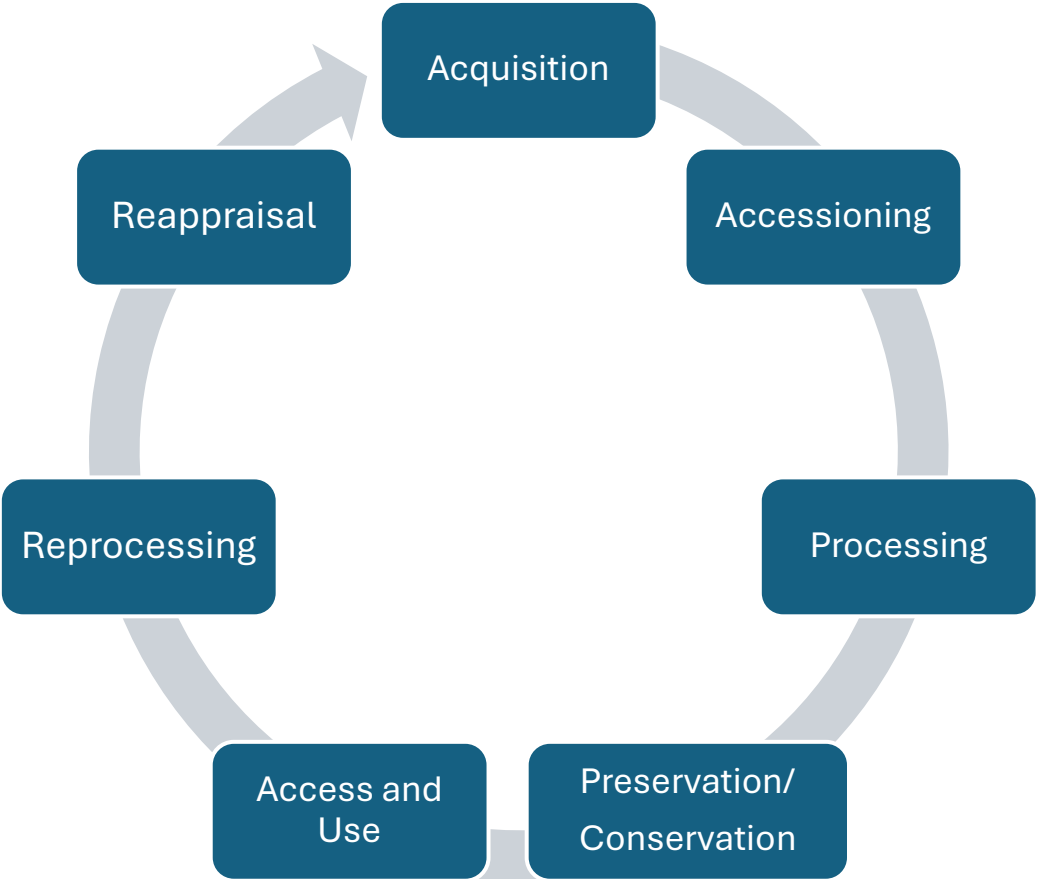
Where appraisal takes place



(weeding or micro-appraisal)



Where appraisal takes place

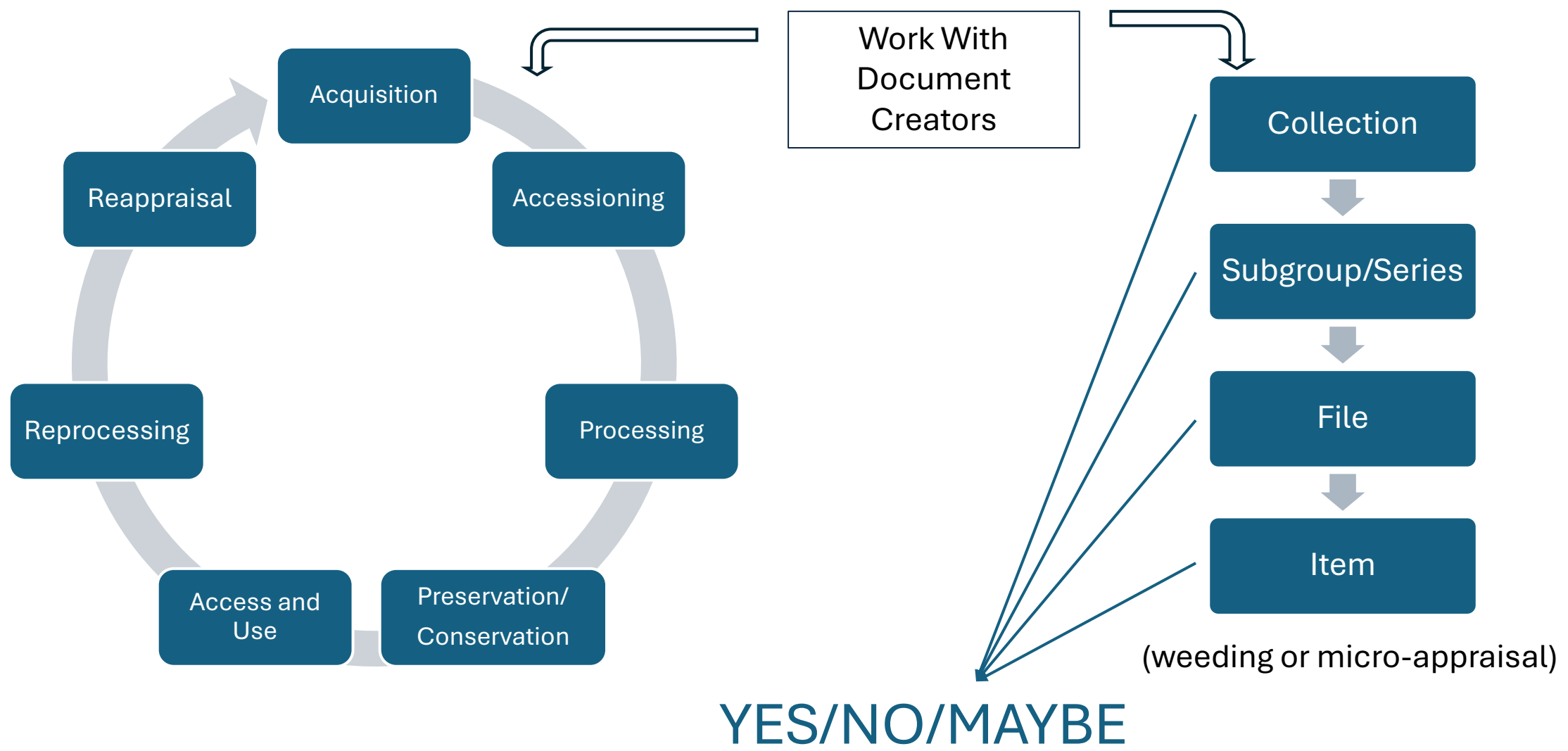


(weeding or micro-appraisal)

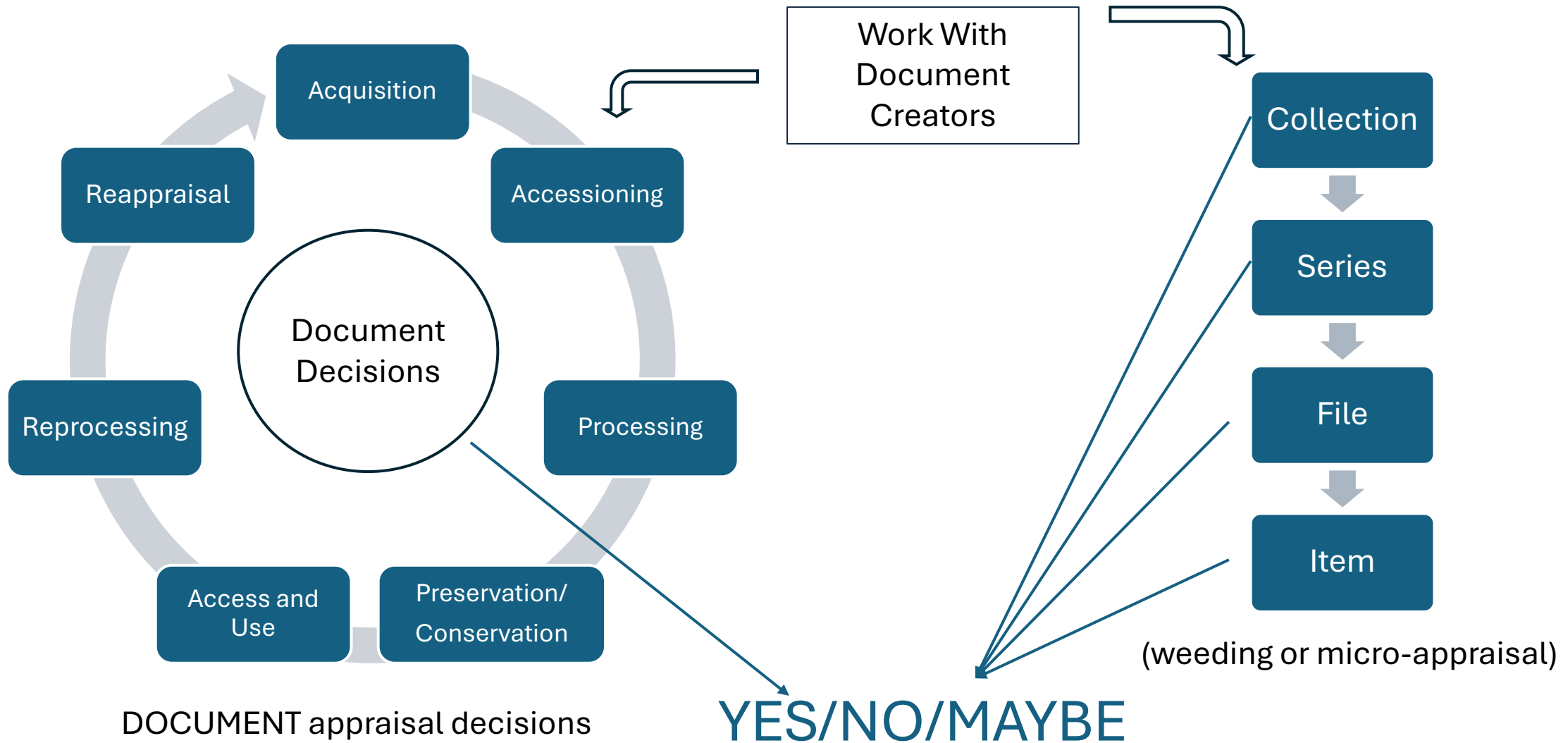
YES/NO/MAYBE



Where appraisal takes place



Where appraisal takes place





Factors Influencing Appraisal

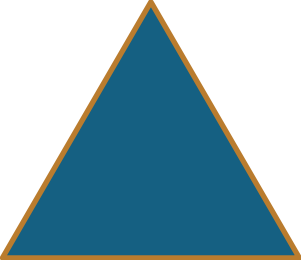
- Potential enduring/historical value balanced against →
- Costs of keeping and providing access
- Repository type and documentary mission



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



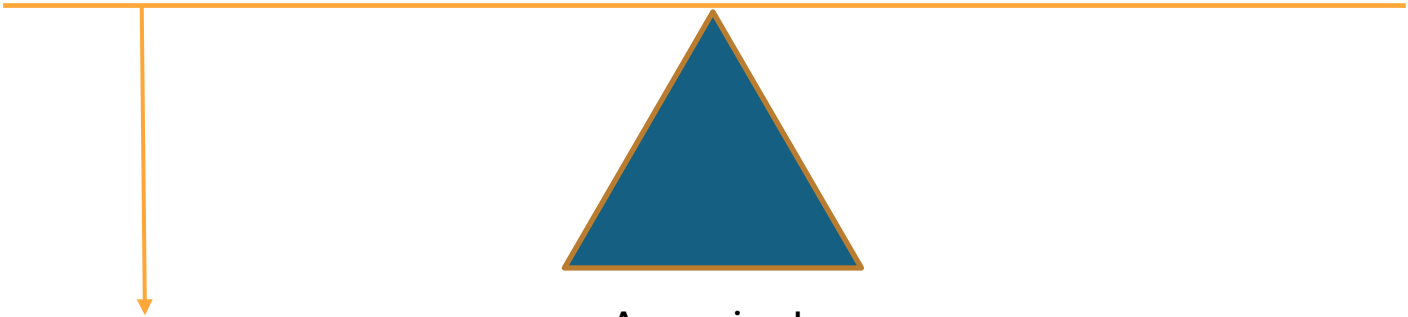
Appraisal



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

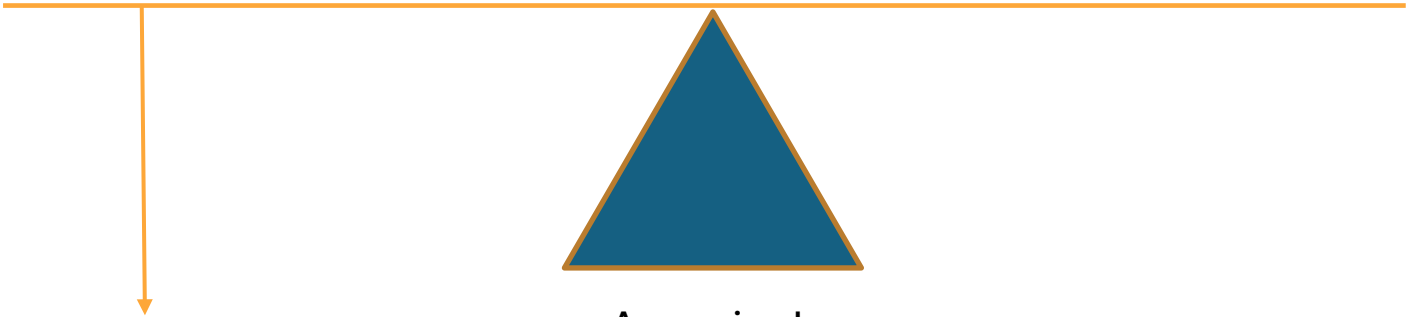
Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

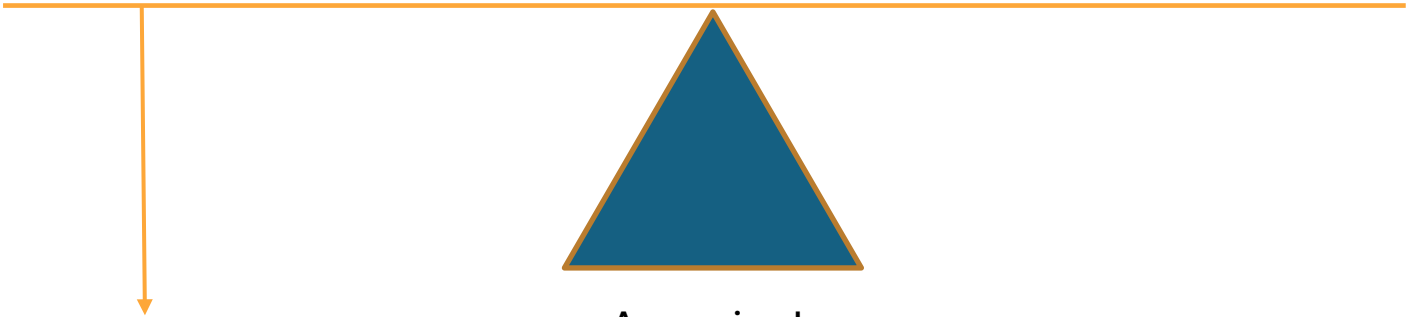
- As long as useful/needed
- Ephemeral



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

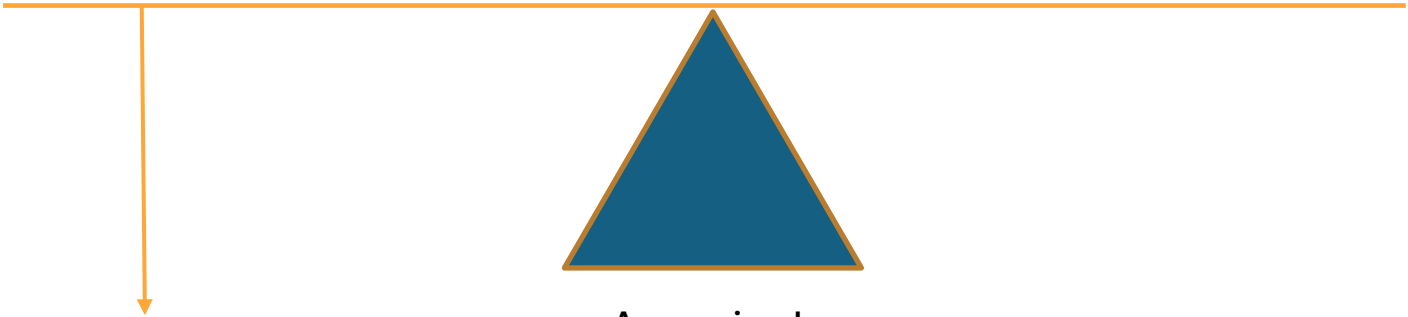
Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

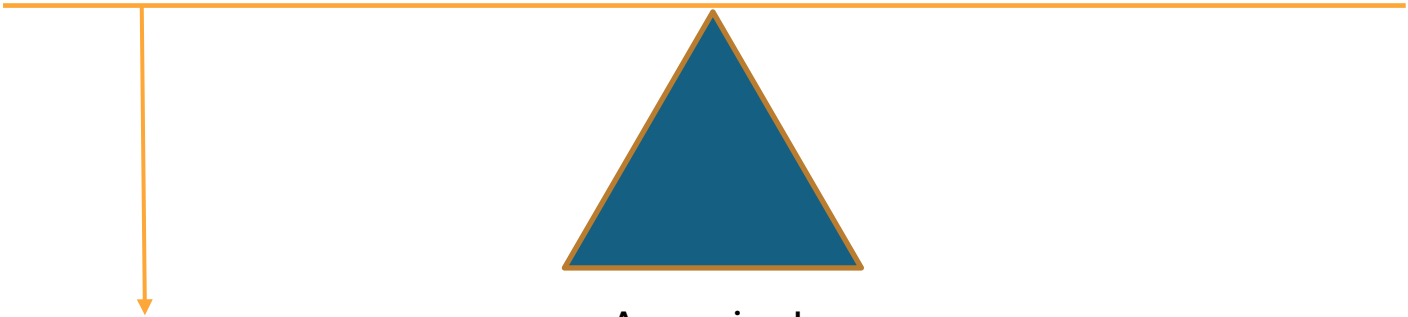
- Informational: people, places, subjects, events



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

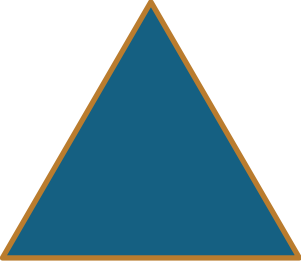
- Evidential: Evidence of actions, decisions, thoughts, feelings



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access

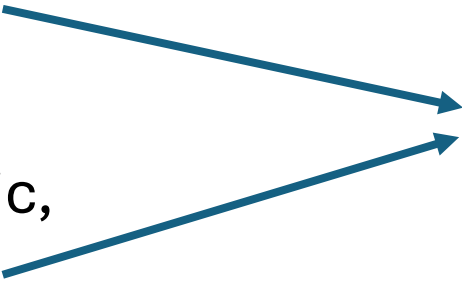


Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

- Informational and evidential values



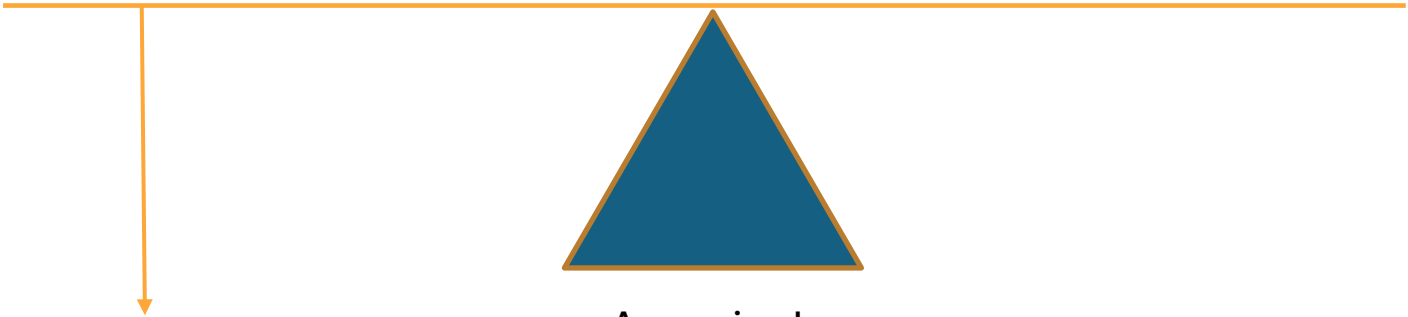
Meeting minutes



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access

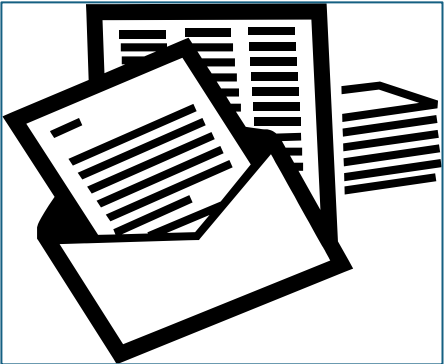


Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

- Informational and evidential values



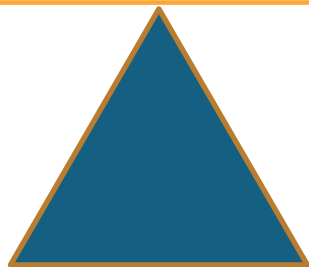
Thank you note, 1988, 2028



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

- Informational and evidential values



Collections in Archives

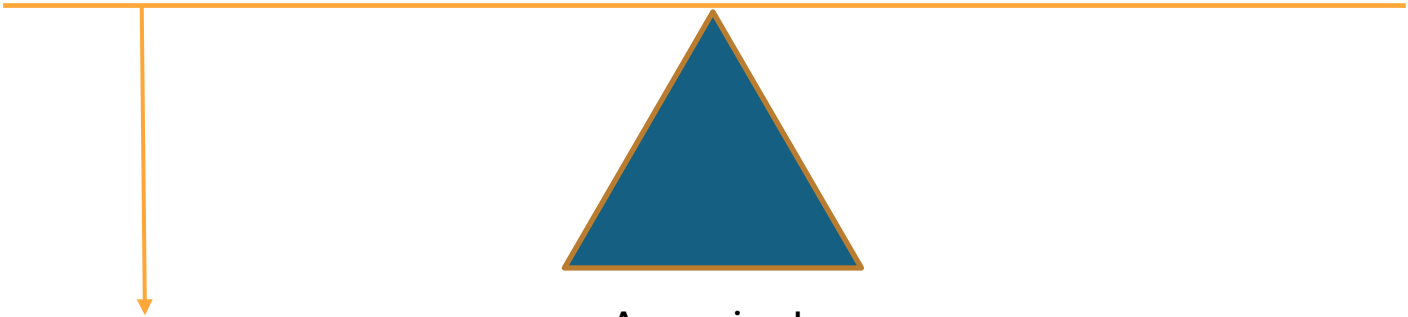




Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

- Informational and evidential values

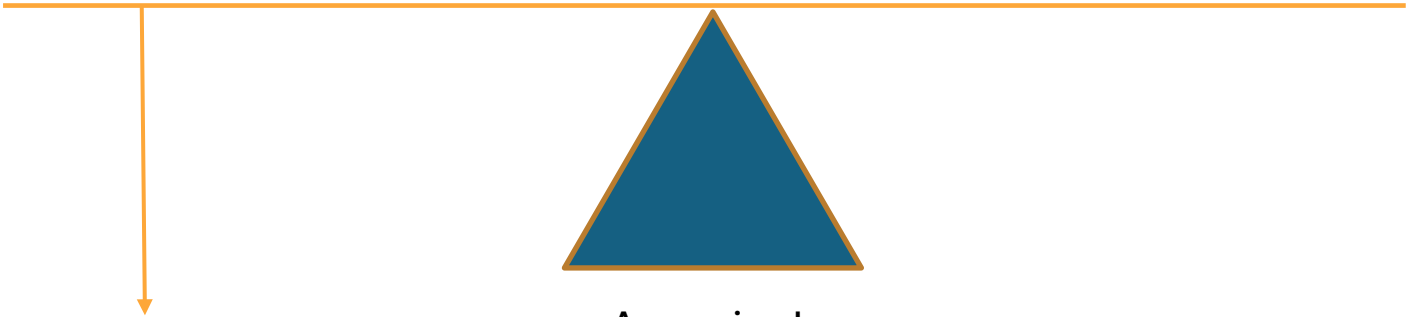




Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access

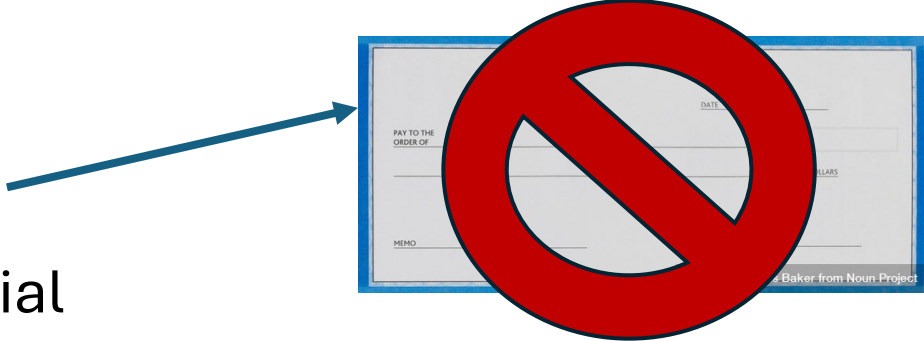


Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural

- Informational and evidential values

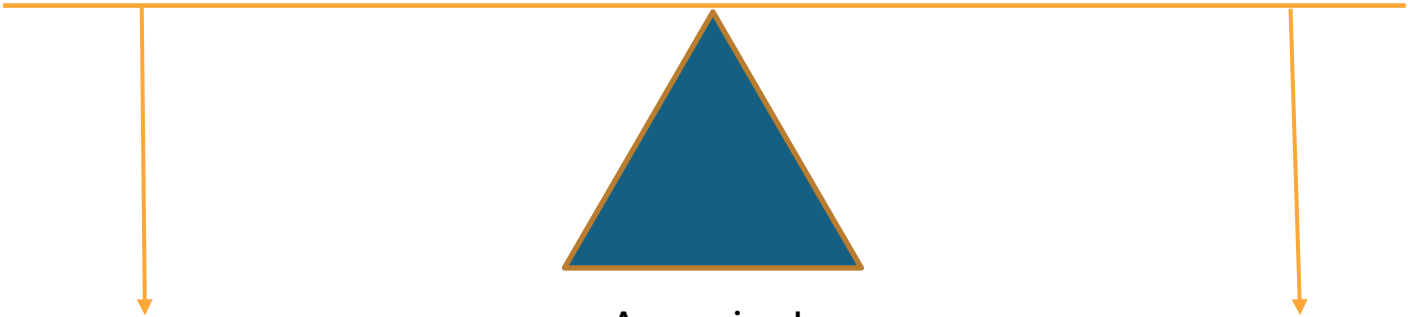




Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Money

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

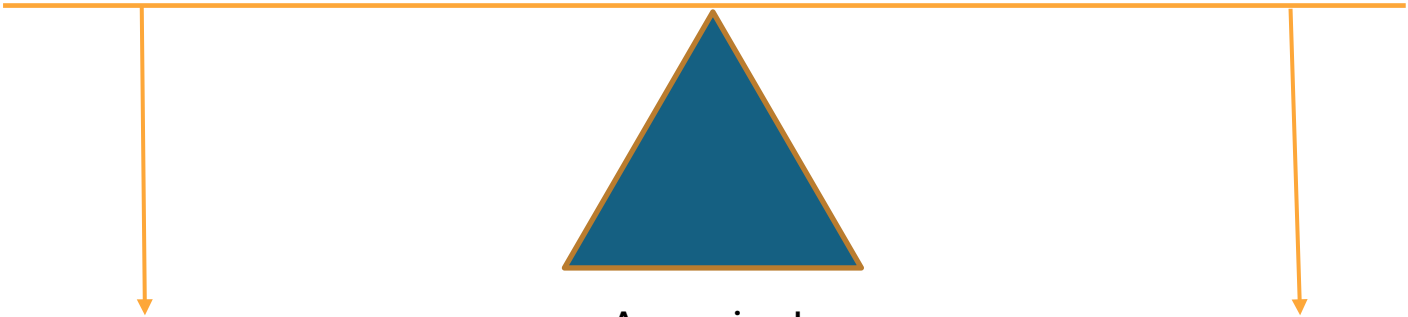
Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural (informational, evidential)



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Money
Space

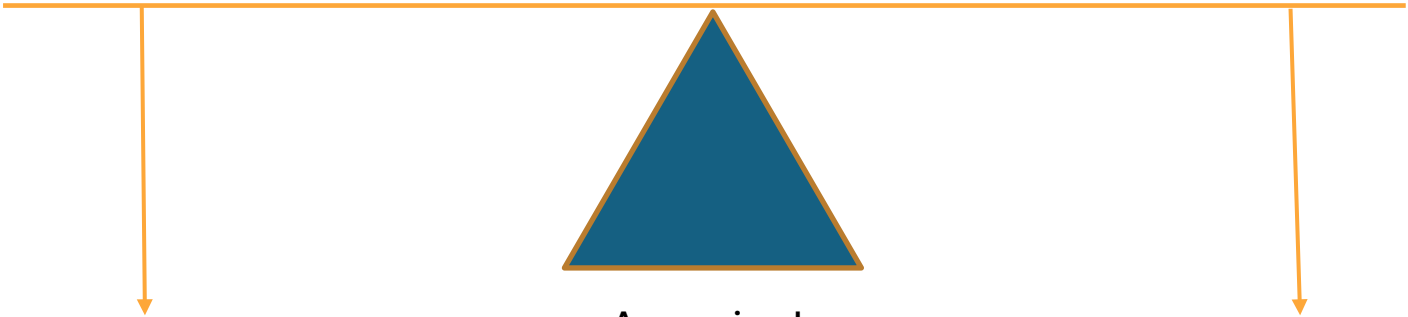
Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural (informational, evidential)



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural (informational, evidential)

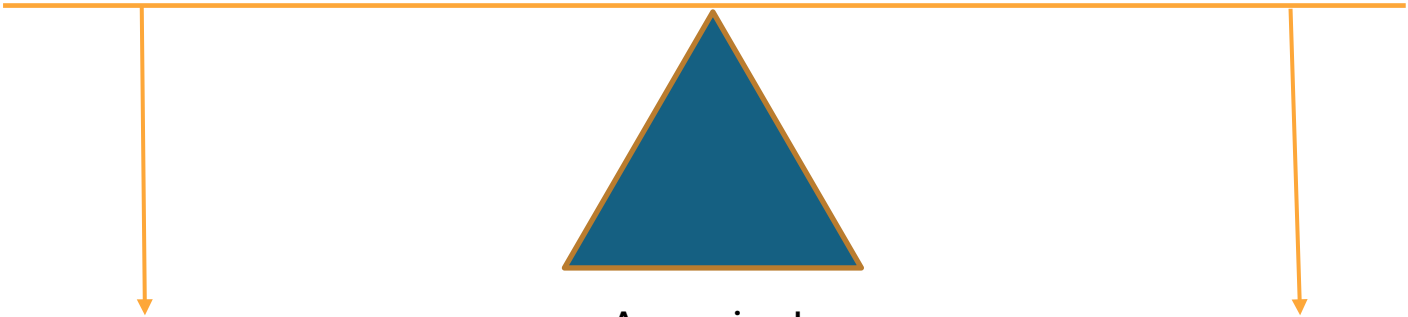
Money
Space
Time



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural (informational, evidential)

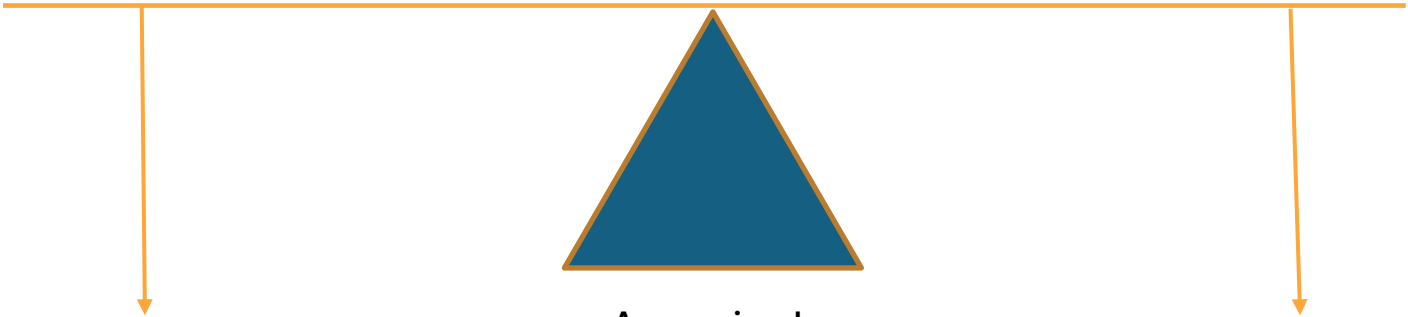
Money
Space
Time
Expertise



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access



Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

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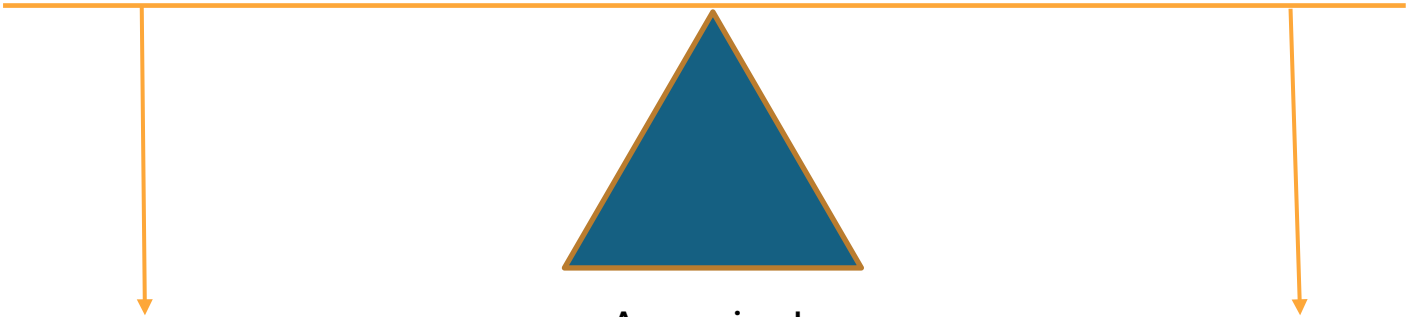
Money
Space
Time
Expertise
Relationships and support



Appraisal factors: value and costs

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access

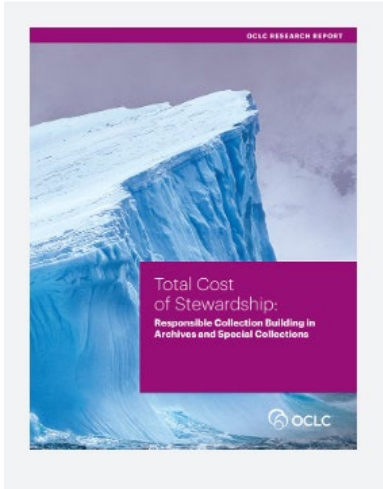


Appraisal

Primary values: administrative, fiscal, legal, operational

Secondary values: strategic, historical, cultural (informational, evidential)

Money
Space
Time
Expertise
Relationships and support



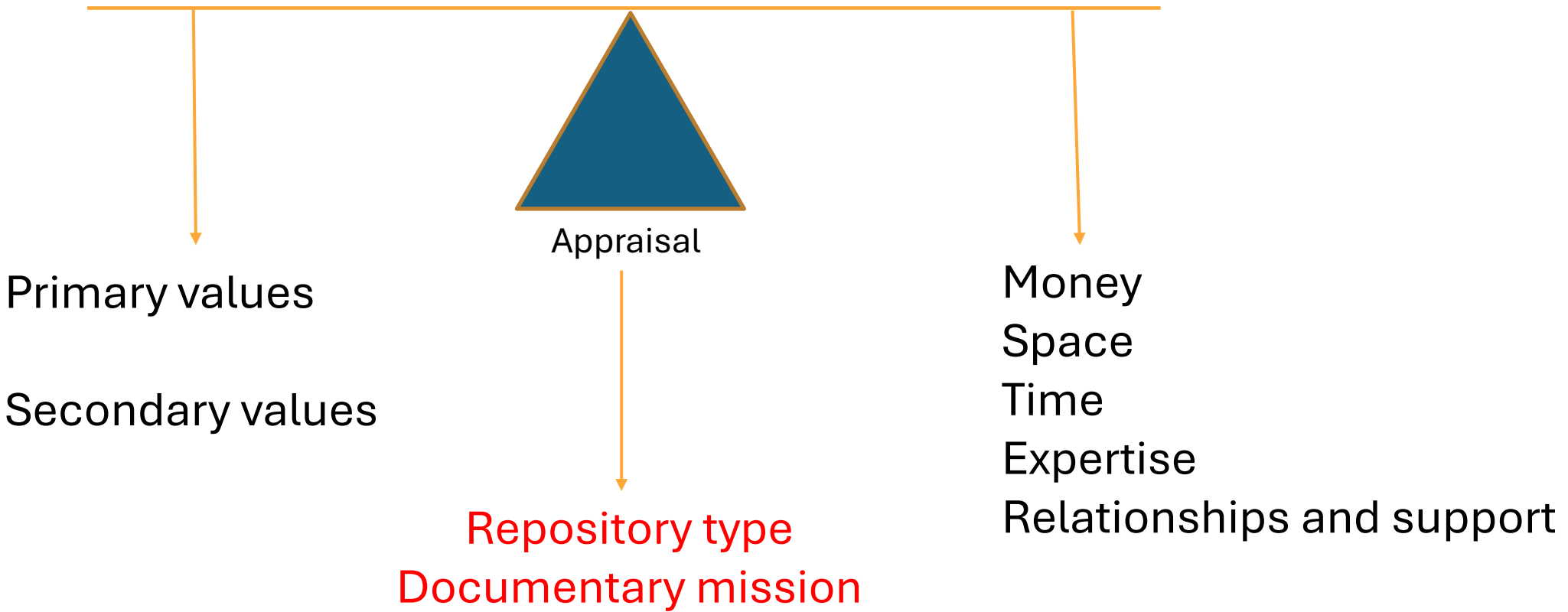
OCLC Total Cost of Stewardship, 2021



Appraisal factors: Repository types/mission

Value of content

Costs of keeping and providing access





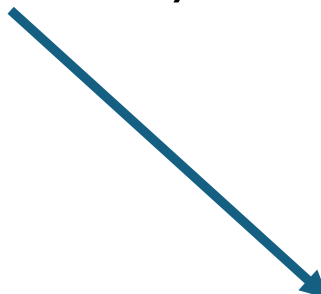
Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- 3 different types
- (1 emerging type)



Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
 - Deed of gift

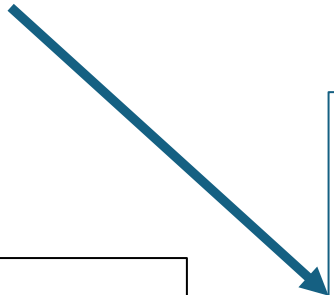


- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Format
- ✓ Specific event, individual, group, or era

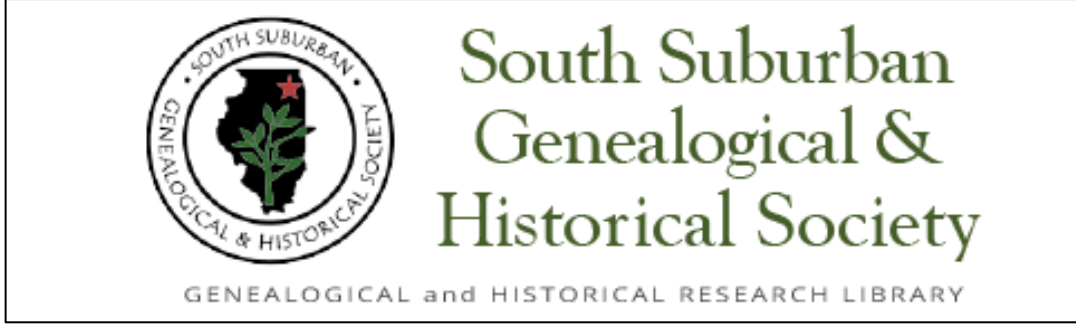


Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
 - Deed of gift



- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Format
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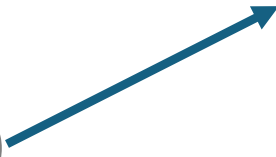


South Suburban Genealogical and Historical Society, example collecting repository



Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
- Institutional archives (internal)
 - Transfer form

- 
- ✓ Geographic location
 - ✓ Subject
 - ✓ Format
 - ✓ Specific event, individual, group, or era

Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
- Institutional archives (internal)
 - Transfer form

- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Format
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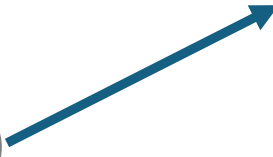


Illinois State Archives, example institutional archives



Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
- Institutional archives (internal)
- Hybrid repository
 - External and internal
 - Deed of gift and transfer form



- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Format
- ✓ Specific event, individual, group, or era



Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
- Institutional archives (internal)
- Hybrid repository
 - External and internal
 - Deed of gift and transfer form

- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Format
- ✓ Specific event, individual, group, or era



Southern Illinois University Carbondale Special Collections Research Center,
example hybrid repository

Appraisal factors: Repository types/missions

- Emerging: community archives
 - Document the history and culture of a community
 - Initiated and managed outside established power structures
 - Collaborative
 - May consider different frameworks and questions than in this webinar





Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy



Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Example:
 - Historical Society's mission = preserve and share history of city or county
 - Historical Society collection development policy = collect materials in all formats that document the city or county

Appraisal criteria factors:

Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Example: Local Minister Sermon Collection in Historical Society



Sermons

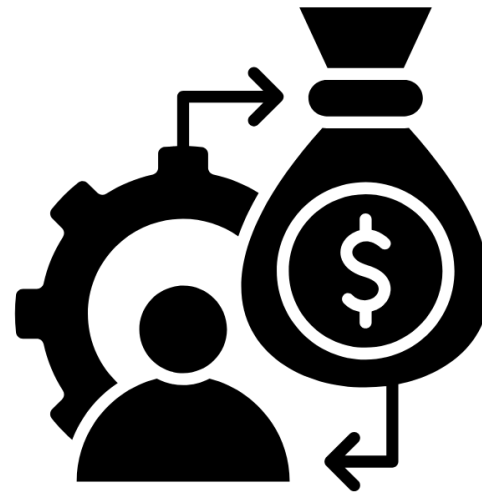


Parishioner's grandparents'
letters not related to the county



Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

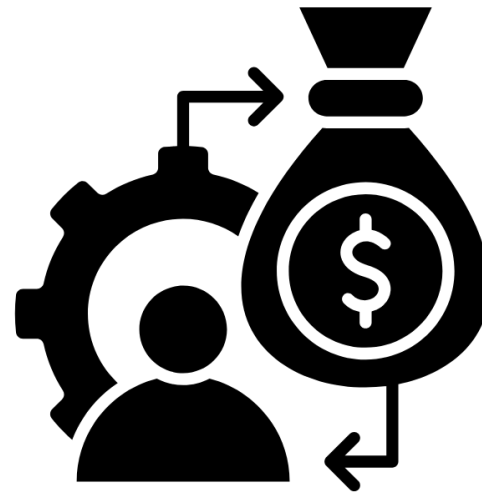
- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources



Created by gus iqdam
from Noun Project

Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Example: Military postcards in Military History Archives



Created by gus iqdam
from Noun Project



Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)



Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
 - Who owns copyright
 - Privacy restrictions
 - Confidentiality restrictions
 - Discards

Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

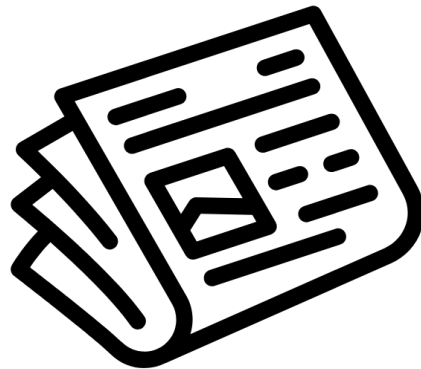
- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
 - Who owns copyright
 - Privacy restrictions
 - Confidentiality restrictions
 - Discards
- Example: Jones family papers in the Western Historical Society



Photo by [Umberto Cofini](#) on [Unsplash](#)⁶³

Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
- Politics and relationships
- Example: Mayor's personal papers in Anytown Historical Society





Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
- Politics and relationships
- Example: Donor interference in collection decisions and archivist pressure to comply

Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
- Politics and relationships
- Example: Collaboration on joint appraisal with communities





Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols/property rights and repatriation requirements

Appraisal criteria factors: Collecting repositories

- Mission statement
- Collection development policy
- Available resources
- Ownership transfer arrangements (i.e. purchase, deed of gift, etc.)
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols/property rights and repatriation requirements

PROTOCOLS
FOR
NATIVE AMERICAN
ARCHIVAL MATERIALS



<https://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/>



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available
- Politics and relationships
 - High-level officers or founders



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols and repatriation requirements



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols and repatriation requirements

- Records retention schedule(s)
 - Kinds of records created and used
 - How long they should be kept for primary value/retention period
 - What happens after they reach their retention = disposition



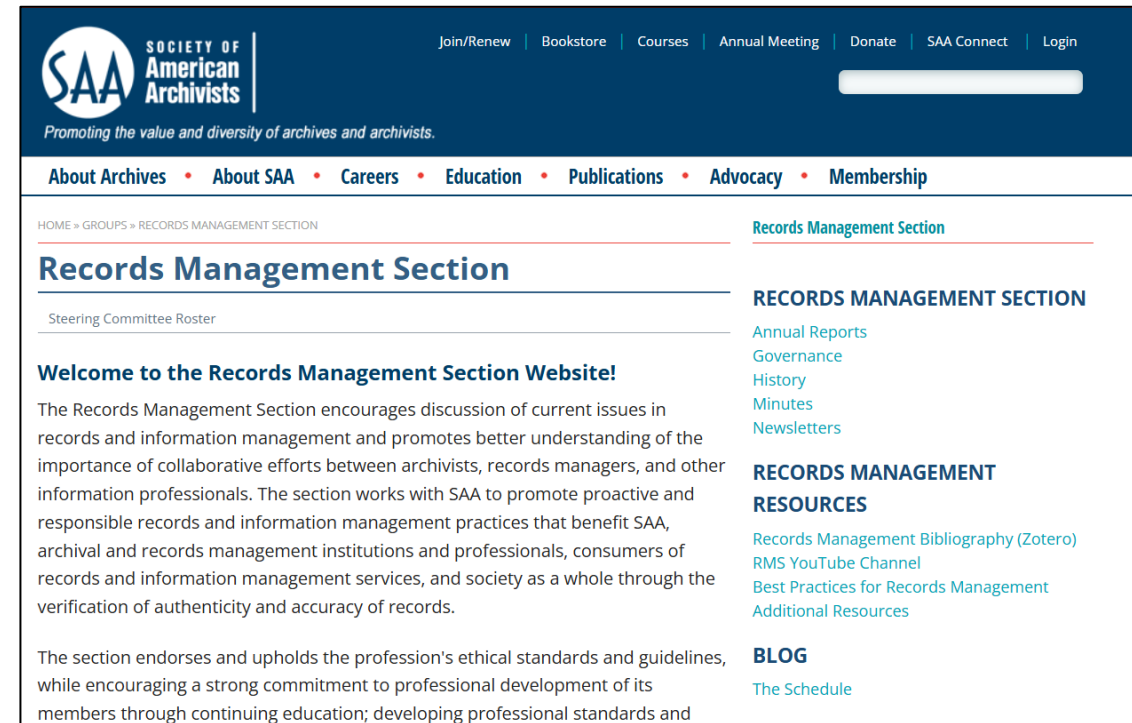
Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols and repatriation requirements

- Records retention schedule(s)
- Federal, state, and local law (examples)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Family Medical Leave Act
 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Mission statement
- Resources available
- Politics and relationships
- Cultural protocols and repatriation requirements
- Records retention schedule(s)
- Federal, state, and local law (examples)
 - Americans with Disabilities Act
 - Family Medical Leave Act
 - Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act



The screenshot shows the website for the Society of American Archivists (SAA) Records Management Section. The header includes the SAA logo and navigation links for Join/Renew, Bookstore, Courses, Annual Meeting, Donate, SAA Connect, and Login. The main navigation bar lists About Archives, About SAA, Careers, Education, Publications, Advocacy, and Membership. The page title is "Records Management Section" and the breadcrumb trail is "HOME » GROUPS » RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION". The main content area features a "Welcome to the Records Management Section Website!" message, followed by a paragraph describing the section's mission and a paragraph about ethical standards. A sidebar on the right contains links for "RECORDS MANAGEMENT SECTION" (Annual Reports, Governance, History, Minutes, Newsletters), "RECORDS MANAGEMENT RESOURCES" (Records Management Bibliography (Zotero), RMS YouTube Channel, Best Practices for Records Management, Additional Resources), and "BLOG" (The Schedule).

SAA Records Management Section,
<https://www2.archivists.org/groups/records-management-section>

Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

Best Practices for Records Management

Steering Committee Roster

Our intention is to provide workflows, quick introductions, and examples of policies and procedural documentation for records managers. This list is not exhaustive or prescriptive.

If you have documentation you would like to add to this list, please email us at saarecordsmanagement@gmail.com.

Records Retention Schedules:

- [North Carolina Community College System](#)
- [University of North Carolina System](#)
- [Simmons College](#)
- [Dartmouth College](#)
- [University of Michigan](#)
- [Functional Schedule for State Agencies \(NC\)](#)
- [RDAs for State Agencies/Universities/Colleges \(AL\)](#)
- [State Agency and Local Government Records Retention Schedules \(WY\)](#)
- [General Records Schedules for Local Government Agencies \(NC\)](#)
- [Retention Schedules for Local Government Entities \(WA\)](#)
- [State Retention Schedule \(TX\)](#)
- [Certified State Agency Schedules \(including universities\) \(TX\)](#)
- [Local Government Retention Schedules \(TX\)](#)

SAA Records Management Section “Best Practices for Records Management” list of example records schedules
<https://www2.archivists.org/groups/records-management-section/best-practices-for-records-management>



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- If no retention schedule, start with surveying
- Determine types of records created by the organization
- And why records are created
- Determine how long each type of record should be retained
- Summarize or classify into records series
 - With description, retention period, and disposition

“U0100 Correspondence—Official”
from the *KY State University Model
Records Retention Schedule*

Archives and Records Management Division Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives		
STATE AGENCY RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE		State University Model A. General Records
Series	Records Title and Description	Record Group Number 7050
U0100	Correspondence - Official (V)	This series documents the major functions of an office and important events in its history. It documents major changes in policy and/or procedures, and admission requirements, standards in curriculum, proposals, etc.
	Access Restrictions	Universities should consult legal counsel regarding open records matters.
	Contents	Series contains: Memoranda, letters, reports, activities, event announcements
	Retention and Disposition	Retain until no longer useful, then transfer to the University Archives for permanent retention.

Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

Records Retention Scheduling: A Procedural Guide

Contents

1. Introduction
 - 1.1 Definitions
 - 1.2 Legal Requirements
 - 1.3 State Libraries, Archives, and Records Commission
 - 1.4 Summary of the Process
 2. Records Inventory
 - 2.1 When to Conduct an Inventory
 - 2.2 Participants
 3. Records Retention Schedule
 - 3.1 The Records Series
 - 3.2 Contents of the Retention Schedule
 - 3.3 Types of Retention Schedules
 4. Records Description and Analysis
 5. Retention Schedule Approval
 6. Administrative Regulations
 7. Retention Schedule Distribution
 8. Timeline
- Appendix A:** Records Description and Analysis Form and Instructions

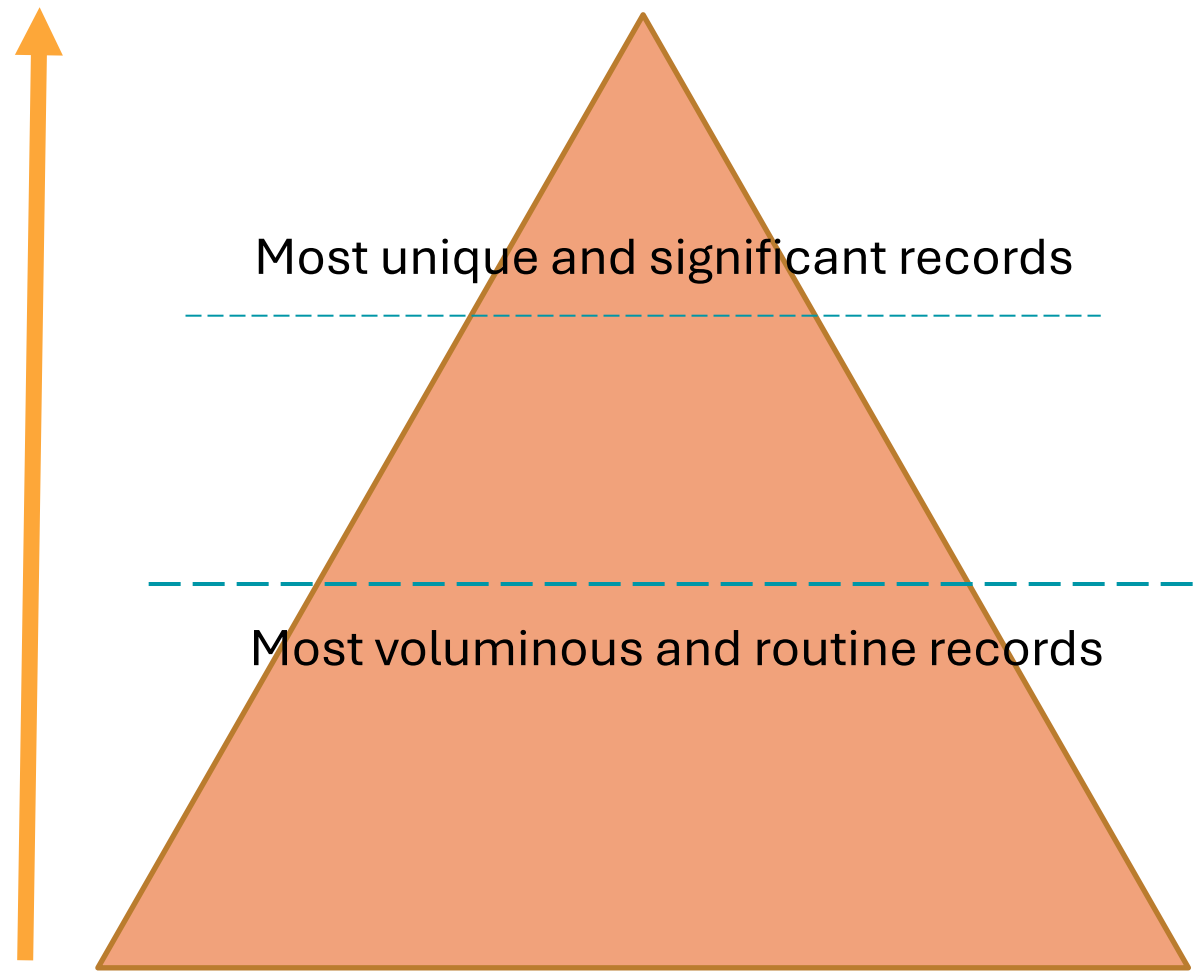
KDLA, "Records Retention Scheduling: A Procedural Guide," 2021.

https://kdla.ky.gov/records/Documents/Retention_Scheduling_Guidelines_November%202021.pdf 78



Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

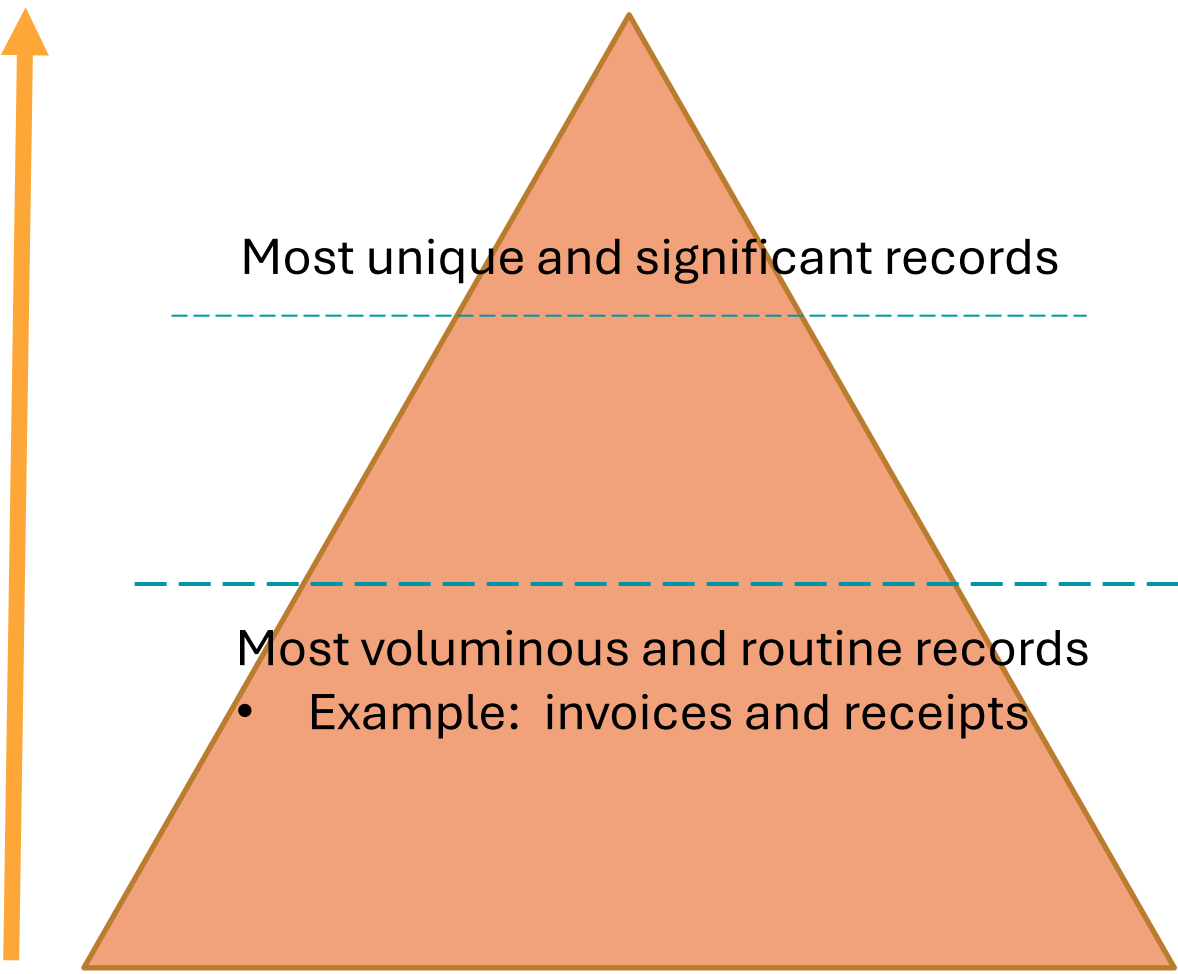
- Pyramid of records significance or value
- Selection decisions take place:
 - At records transfer
 - With records creators
 - During further processing





Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

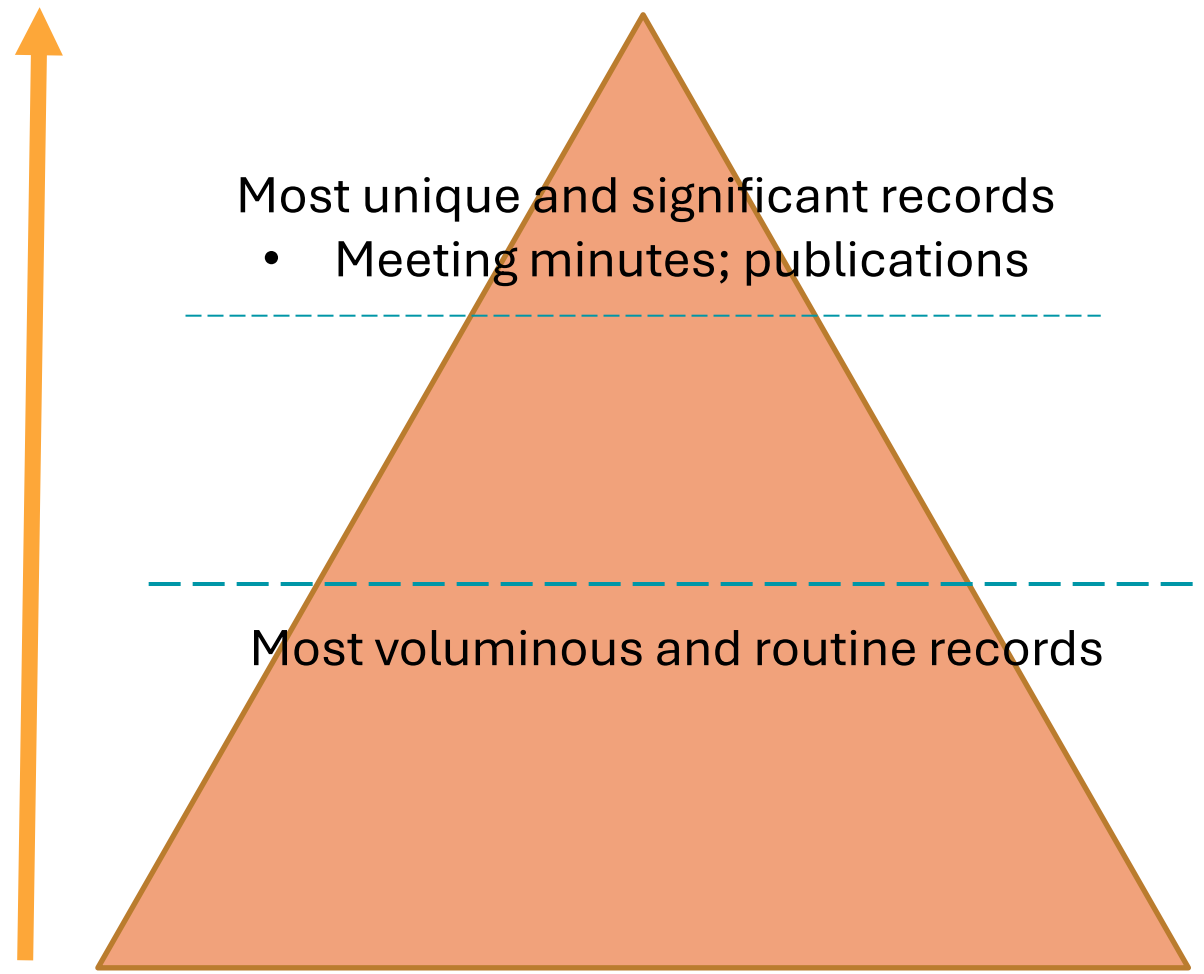
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Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

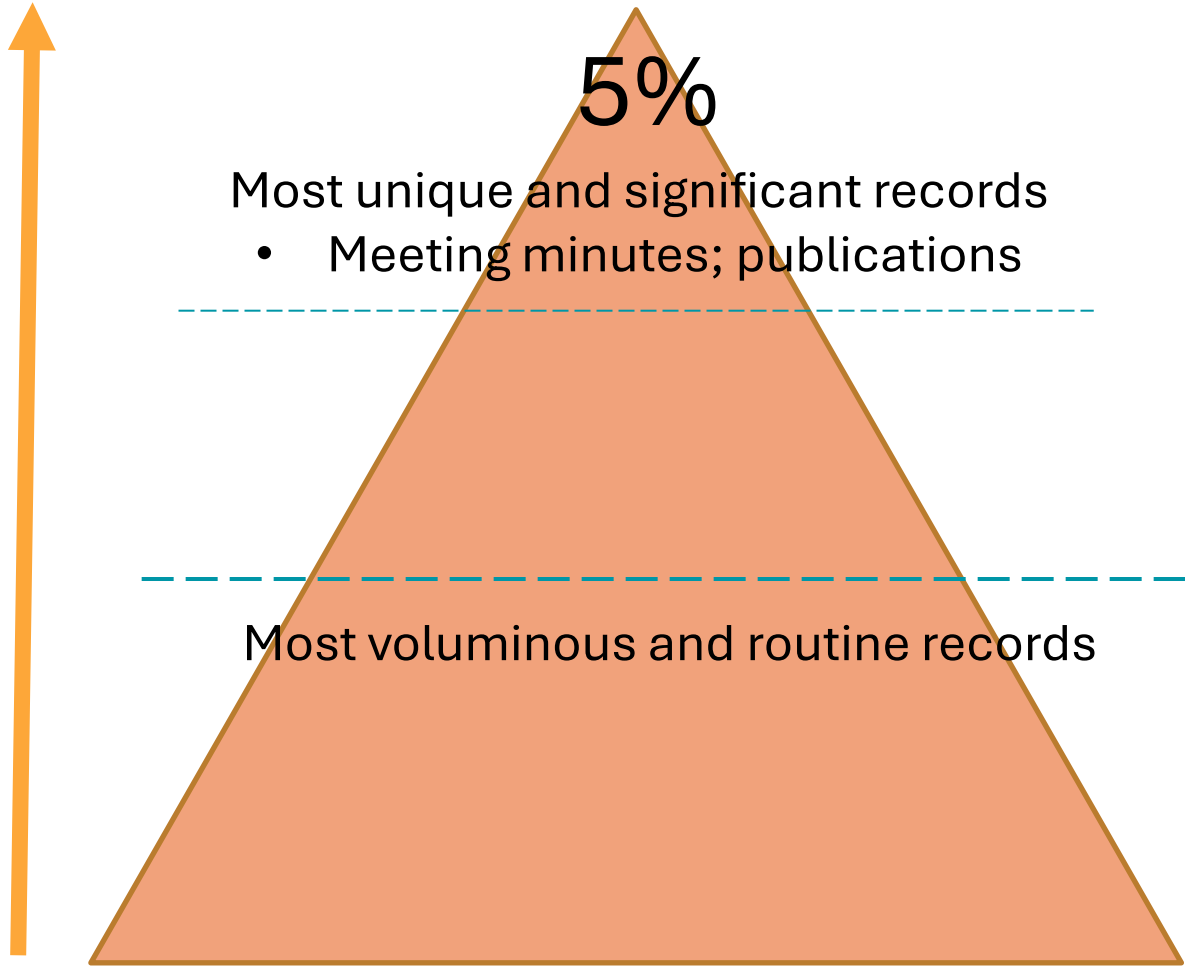
- Pyramid of records significance or value
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Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

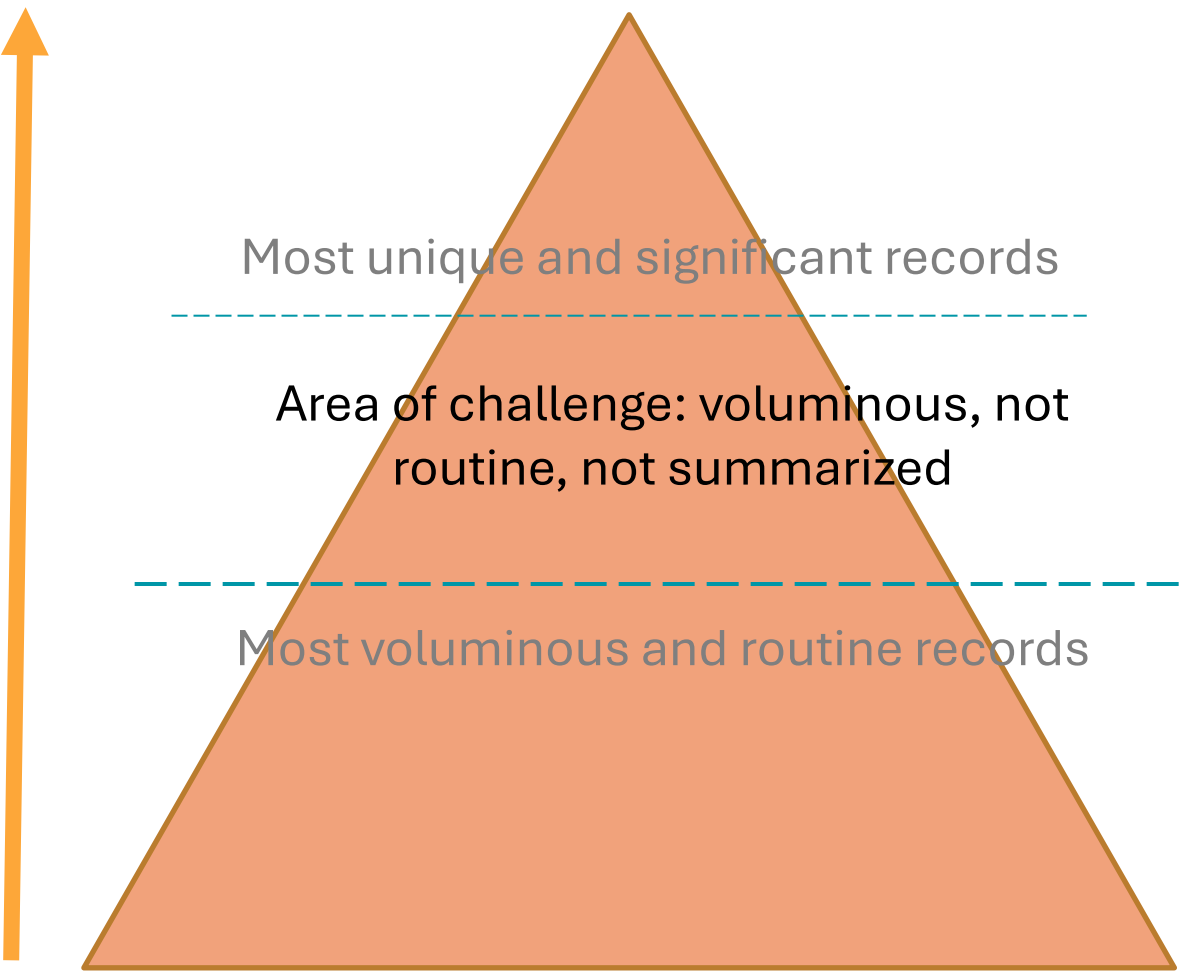
- Pyramid of records significance or value
- Selection decisions take place:
 - At records transfer
 - With records creators
 - During further processing





Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

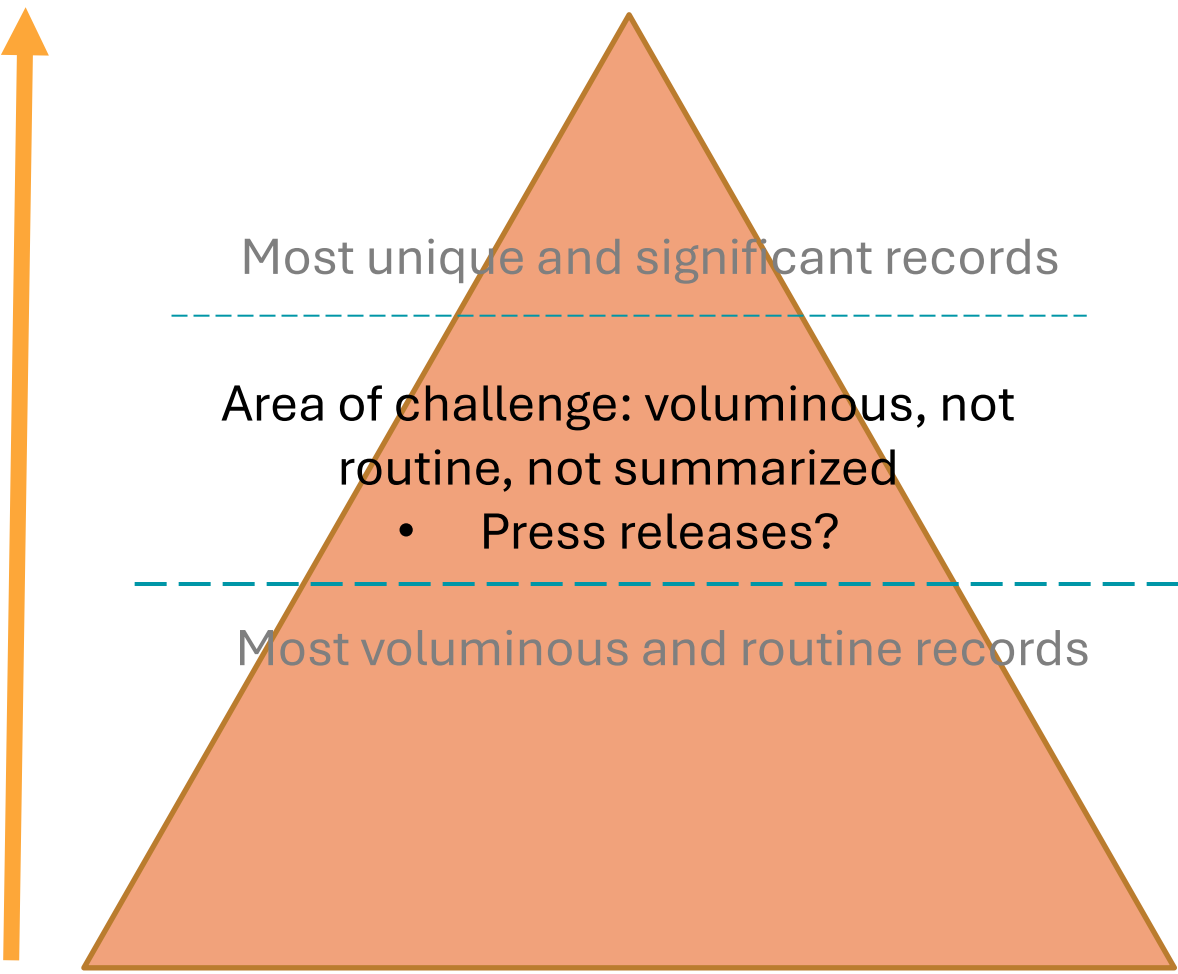
- Pyramid of records significance or value





Appraisal criteria factors: Institutional archives

- Pyramid of records significance or value



Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project



Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy
 - Records retention schedule



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project

Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy
 - Records retention schedule
 - Resources



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project

Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy
 - Records retention schedule
 - Resources
 - Laws, restrictions, and donor agreements



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project

Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy
 - Records retention schedule
 - Resources
 - Laws, restrictions, and donor agreements
 - Cultural protocols



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project

Appraisal criteria factors: Hybrid repositories

- See both collecting repositories AND institutional archives!
 - Documentary mission and collecting policy
 - Records retention schedule
 - Resources
 - Laws, restrictions, and donor agreements
 - Cultural protocols
 - Politics and relationships



Created by Izwar Muis
from Noun Project



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

1. Institutional repositories: Are the documents designated for permanent retention?
 - Collecting repositories: Do the documents fall into the collection policy?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

2. Who, when, where, what/why?
 - ✓ Who (creators)



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

2. Who, when, where, what/why?
 - ✓ Who (creators)
 - ✓ When (dates/age)? Rarity?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

2. Who, when, where, what/why?

- ✓ Who (creators)
- ✓ When (dates/age)? Rarity?
- ✓ What (key activities, events, locations, people)



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

2. Who, when, where, what/why?

- ✓ Who (creators)
- ✓ When (dates/age)? Rarity?
- ✓ What (key activities, events, locations, people)
- ✓ What (planning, decisions, outcomes)



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

2. Who, when, where, what/why?

- ✓ Who (creators)
- ✓ When (dates/age)? Rarity?
- ✓ What (key activities, events, locations, people)
- ✓ What (planning, decisions, outcomes)
- ✓ What (function, mission, role, community)



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
 - ✓ Gaps in dates or content?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
 - ✓ Containers or storage?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
 - ✓ Containers or storage?
 - ✓ Migration to newer formats?
 - ✓ Technological expertise required?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
 - ✓ Containers or storage?
 - ✓ Migration to newer formats?
 - ✓ Technological expertise required?
 - ✓ Does format impede access without reformatting?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
 - ✓ Containers or storage?
 - ✓ Migration to newer formats?
 - ✓ Technological expertise required?
 - ✓ Does format impede access without reformatting?
 - ✓ Dirty, dusty, moldy, insect/rodent damage?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
6. State of organization and existing description/labeling?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
6. State of organization and existing description/labeling?
7. **Clear chain of custody and copyright ownership; any access and appraisal restrictions?**



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

3. Is the information summarized in another format?
4. How complete are the documents?
5. Format(s), condition(s), and their requirements?
6. State of organization and existing description/labeling?
7. Clear chain of custody and copyright ownership; any access and appraisal restrictions?
8. Privacy, confidentiality, cultural patrimony concerns?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

9. What storage, staff, and expertise is available?



Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

9. What storage, staff, and expertise is available?
10. What relationships need to be considered?
11. What are my biases and blind spots?



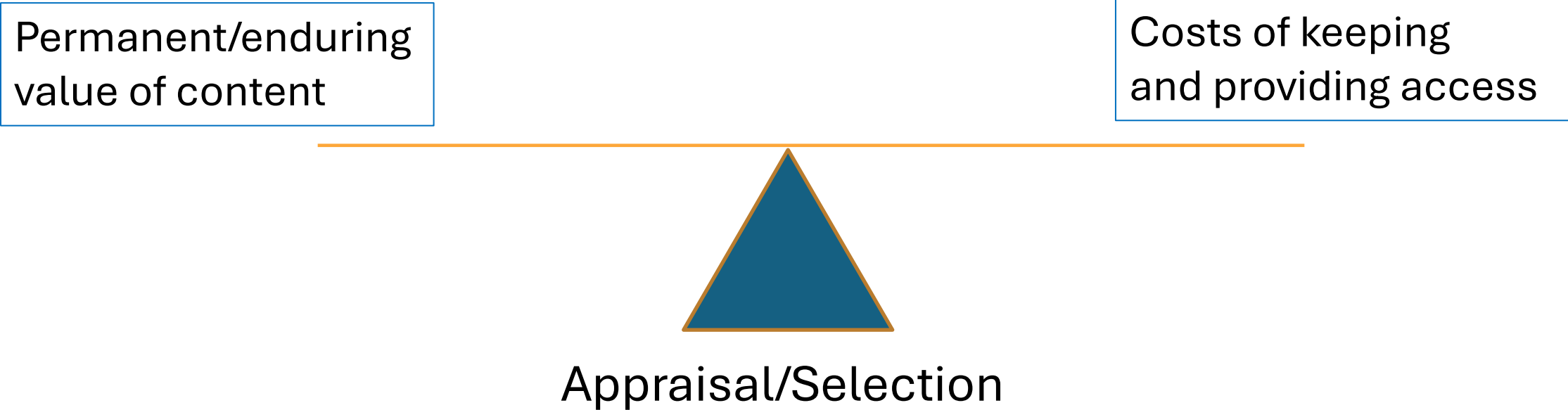
Appraisal/selection criteria: General considerations to start with

9. What storage, staff, and expertise is available?
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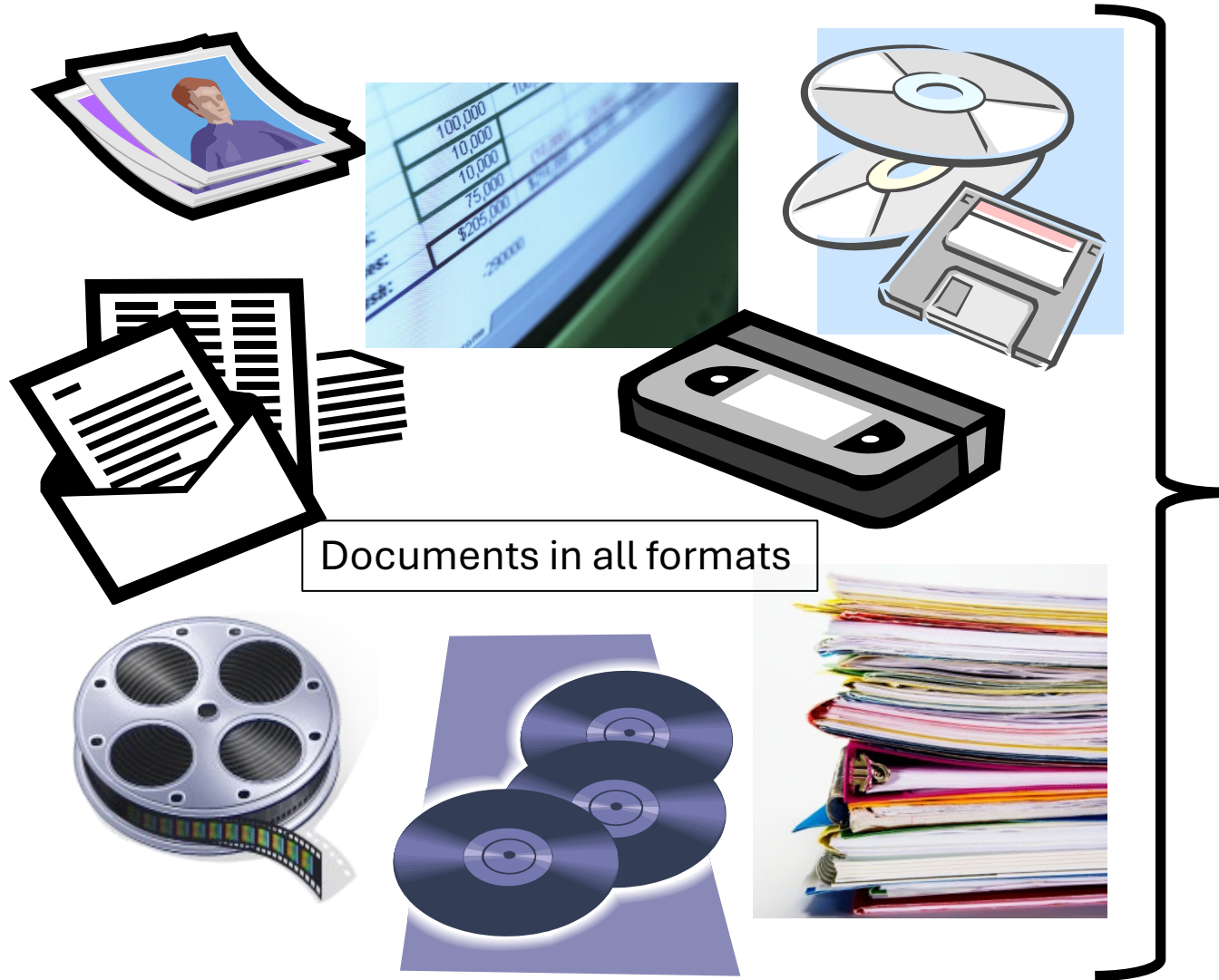
Summary: Appraisal definition

- Appraisal = archival function
- Selection = process of identifying enduring value

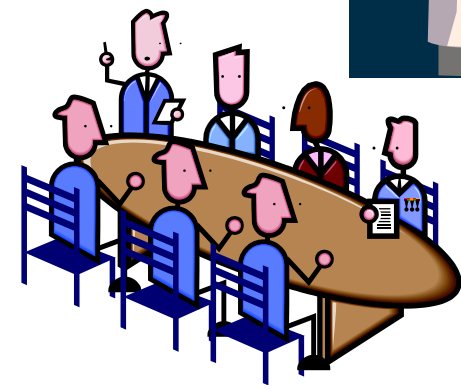


Summary: Appraisal Definition

For a primary purpose



Created or come from

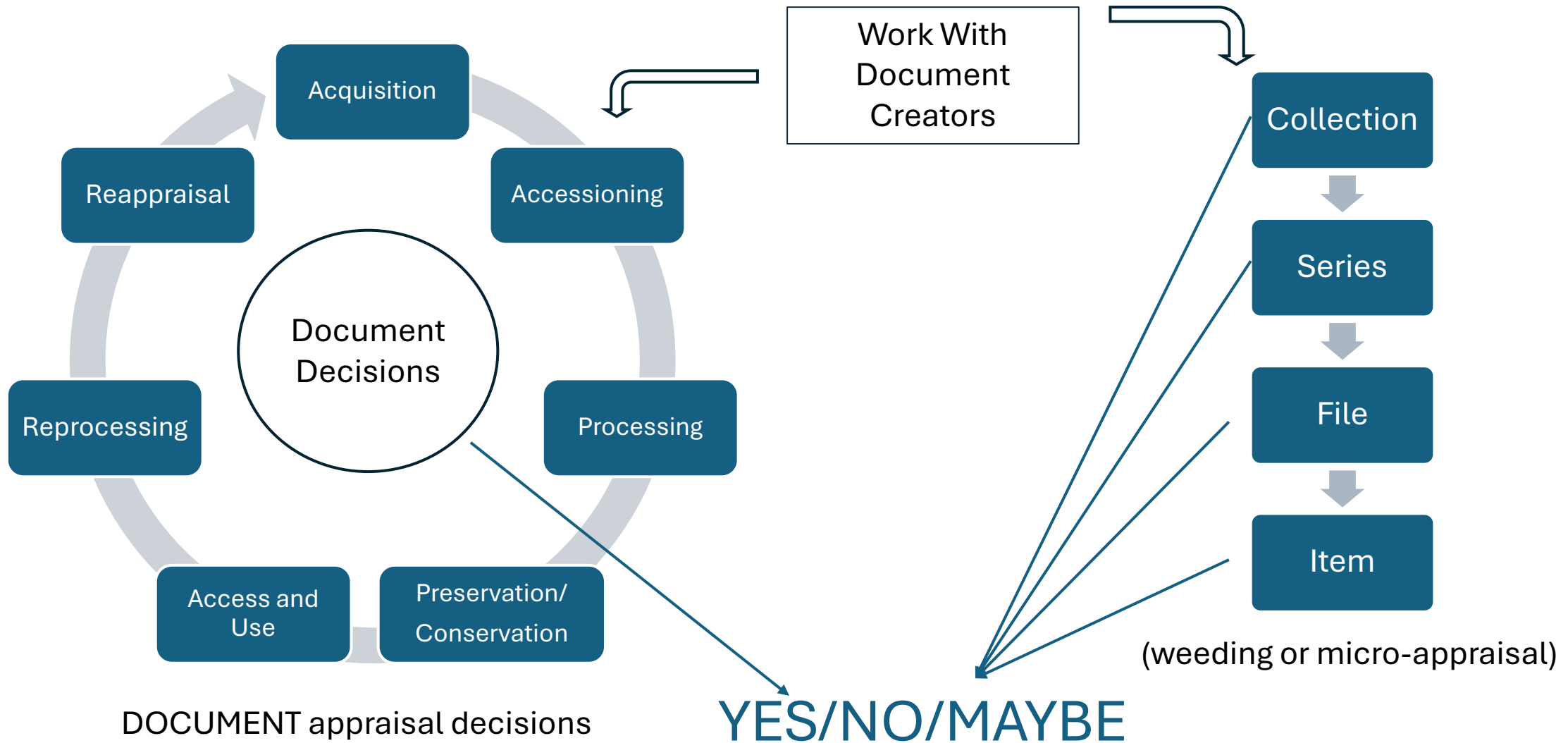


Appraisal



Secondary purpose

Where appraisal takes place

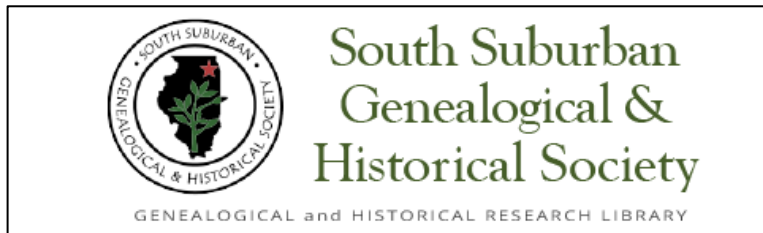


Summary:

Repository types/missions

- Collecting repository (external)
- Institutional archives (internal)
- Hybrid repository

- ✓ Geographic location
- ✓ Subject
- ✓ Specific event, individual, group, or era
- ✓ Format



South Suburban Genealogical and Historical Society, example collecting repository



Illinois State Archives, example institutional archives



Southern Illinois University Special Collections, example hybrid repository

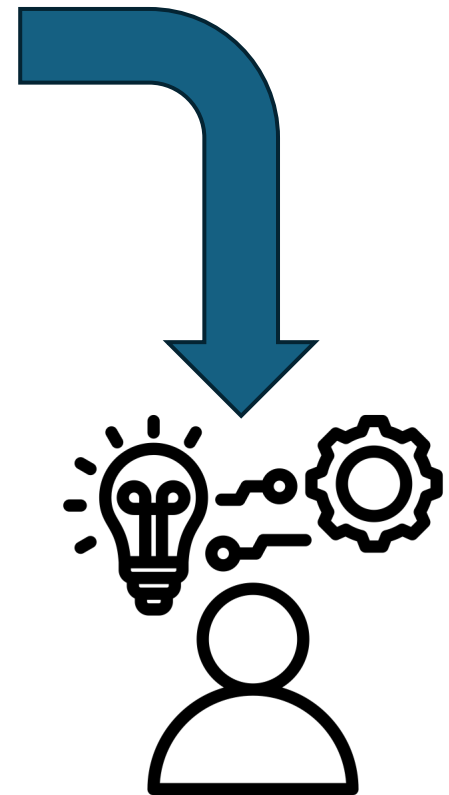


Summary: appraisal criteria questions

- Records retention schedule/Collection development policy
- Who (creators)
- What (age, rarity, information/contents)
- Format, condition, completeness, state of organization
- Donor requirements
- Legal, privacy, cultural patrimony issues
- Stewardship resources
- Stakeholder relationships
- Biases and blind spots

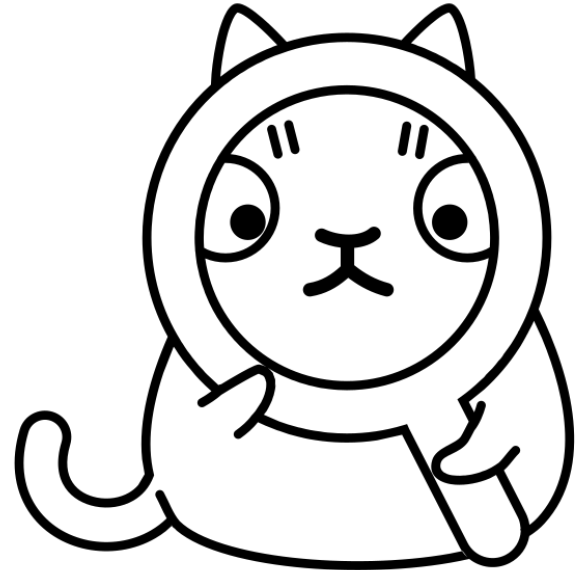
Summary: appraisal criteria questions

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- Stewardship resources
- Stakeholder relationships
- Biases and blind spots





Q&A



**Created by Denis Sazhin
from the Noun Project**

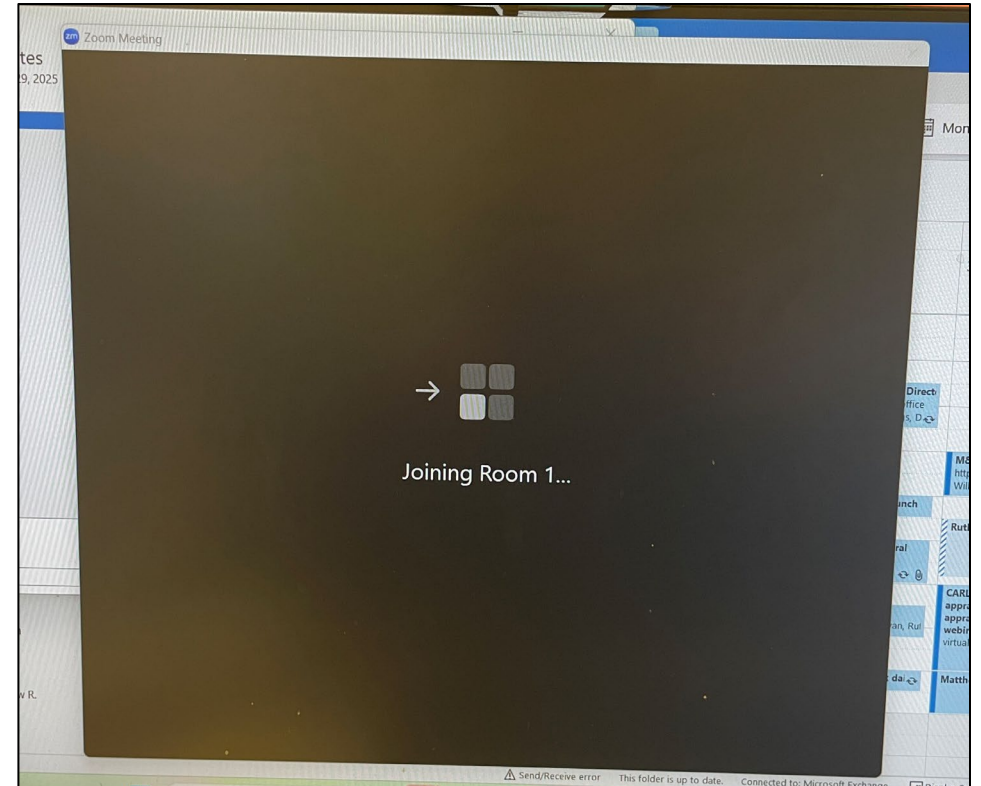
Example Case Study

- County Military Museum and Library postcard collection
- Go to link in the chat or here: <https://bit.ly/40Exf1g>



Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

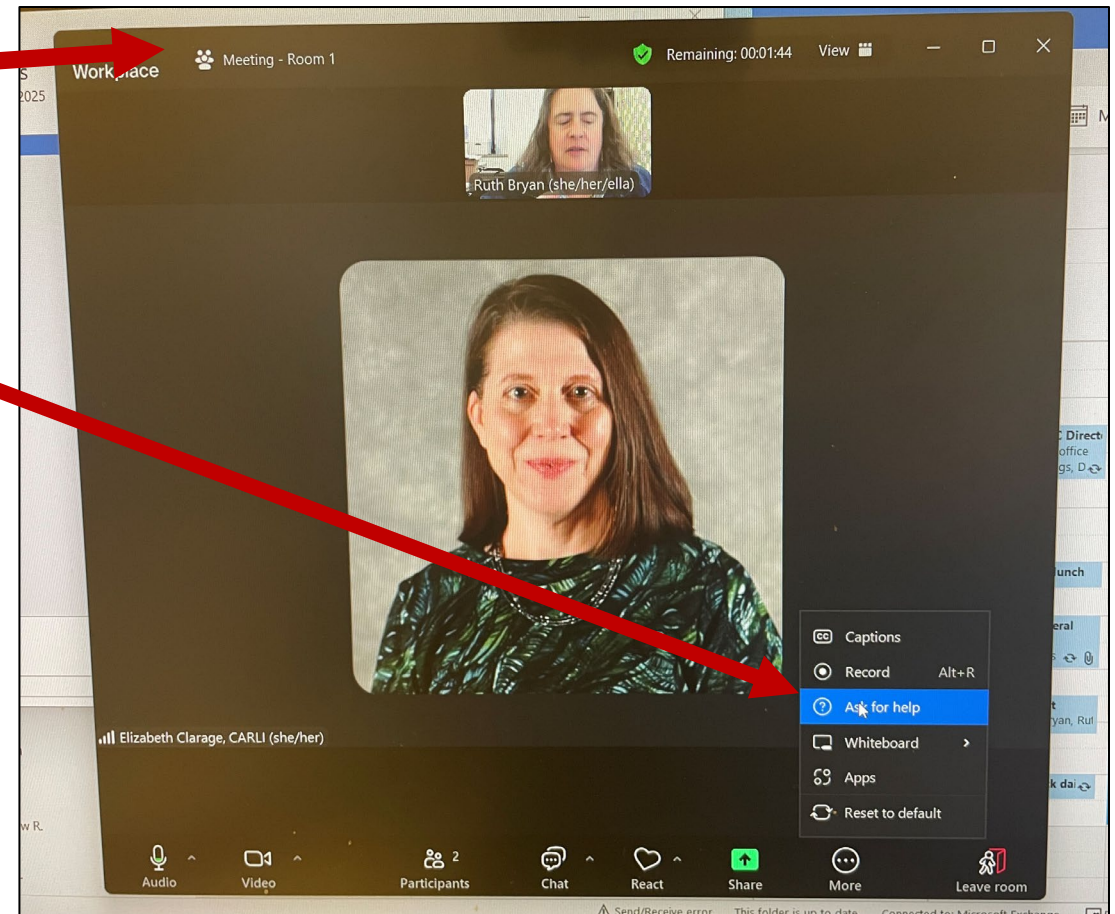
- 30 minutes
- Zoom breakout groups (10 or less people depending on attendance)
- Automatically assigned
- Countdown clock starts at 28 minutes (with 2 minutes left)



What the breakout room joining window looks like.

Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- The breakout room number will be in the top left-hand corner.
- Click on “Ask for help” under “More” if needed.
- Breakout room chat will be lost once you leave the room.





Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

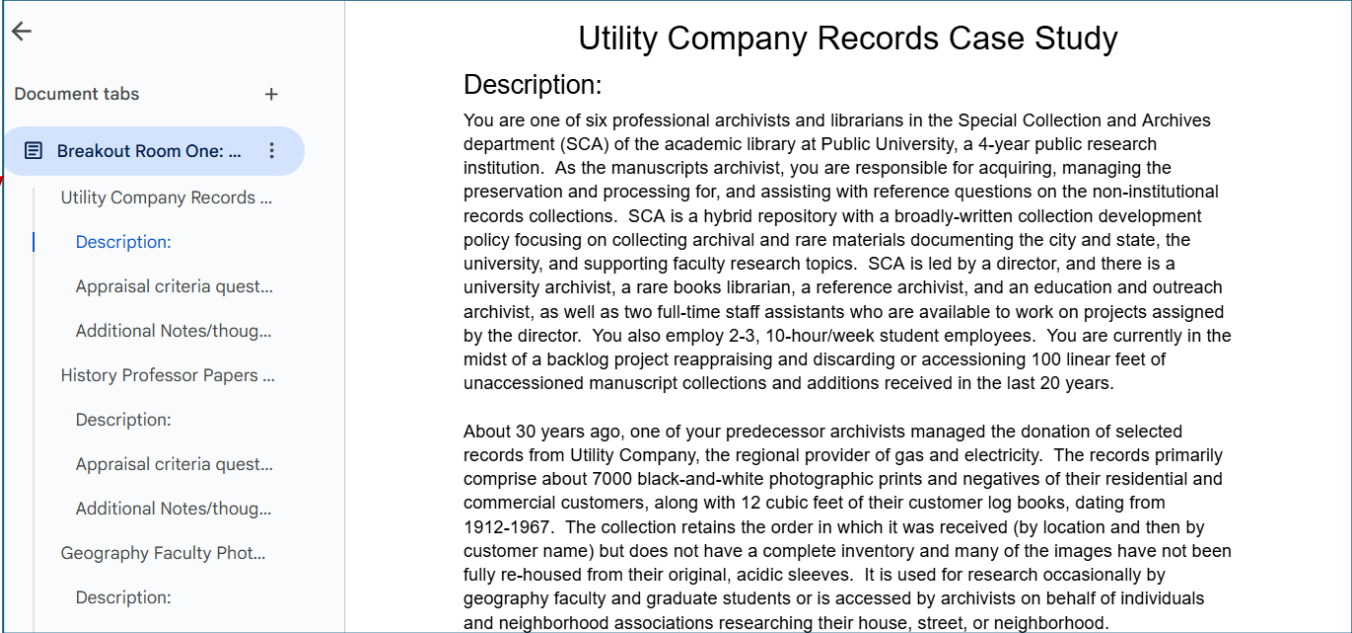


7 Case Studies:

- 3 faculty papers
- 3 organizational/institutional records
- 1 mixed

Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Each breakout group has a case study Google document.
- 3 case studies
- Table of contents
- <https://bit.ly/40Exf1g>



Utility Company Records Case Study

Description:

You are one of six professional archivists and librarians in the Special Collection and Archives department (SCA) of the academic library at Public University, a 4-year public research institution. As the manuscripts archivist, you are responsible for acquiring, managing the preservation and processing for, and assisting with reference questions on the non-institutional records collections. SCA is a hybrid repository with a broadly-written collection development policy focusing on collecting archival and rare materials documenting the city and state, the university, and supporting faculty research topics. SCA is led by a director, and there is a university archivist, a rare books librarian, a reference archivist, and an education and outreach archivist, as well as two full-time staff assistants who are available to work on projects assigned by the director. You also employ 2-3, 10-hour/week student employees. You are currently in the midst of a backlog project reappraising and discarding or accessioning 100 linear feet of unaccessioned manuscript collections and additions received in the last 20 years.

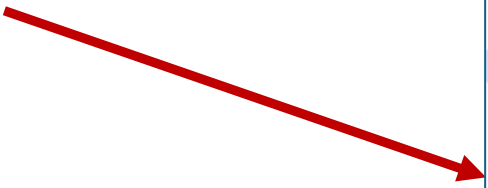
About 30 years ago, one of your predecessor archivists managed the donation of selected records from Utility Company, the regional provider of gas and electricity. The records primarily comprise about 7000 black-and-white photographic prints and negatives of their residential and commercial customers, along with 12 cubic feet of their customer log books, dating from 1912-1967. The collection retains the order in which it was received (by location and then by customer name) but does not have a complete inventory and many of the images have not been fully re-housed from their original, acidic sleeves. It is used for research occasionally by geography faculty and graduate students or is accessed by archivists on behalf of individuals and neighborhood associations researching their house, street, or neighborhood.

Example breakout group Google doc.



Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Case study description



←

Document tabs +

Breakout Room One: ...

Utility Company Records ...

Description:

Appraisal criteria quest...

Additional Notes/thoug...

History Professor Papers ...

Description:

Appraisal criteria quest...

Additional Notes/thoug...

Geography Faculty Phot...

Description:

Utility Company Records Case Study

Description:

You are one of six professional archivists and librarians in the Special Collection and Archives department (SCA) of the academic library at Public University, a 4-year public research institution. As the manuscripts archivist, you are responsible for acquiring, managing the preservation and processing for, and assisting with reference questions on the non-institutional records collections. SCA is a hybrid repository with a broadly-written collection development policy focusing on collecting archival and rare materials documenting the city and state, the university, and supporting faculty research topics. SCA is led by a director, and there is a university archivist, a rare books librarian, a reference archivist, and an education and outreach archivist, as well as two full-time staff assistants who are available to work on projects assigned by the director. You also employ 2-3, 10-hour/week student employees. You are currently in the midst of a backlog project reappraising and discarding or accessioning 100 linear feet of unaccessioned manuscript collections and additions received in the last 20 years.

About 30 years ago, one of your predecessor archivists managed the donation of selected records from Utility Company, the regional provider of gas and electricity. The records primarily comprise about 7000 black-and-white photographic prints and negatives of their residential and commercial customers, along with 12 cubic feet of their customer log books, dating from 1912-1967. The collection retains the order in which it was received (by location and then by customer name) but does not have a complete inventory and many of the images have not been fully re-housed from their original, acidic sleeves. It is used for research occasionally by geography faculty and graduate students or is accessed by archivists on behalf of individuals and neighborhood associations researching their house, street, or neighborhood.

Example breakout group Google doc.

Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Case study description
- Appraisal criteria questions
- And a place for group notes

The top screenshot shows a Google Doc titled "Utility Company Records Case Study". The "Description:" section reads: "You are one of six professional archivists and librarians in the Special Collection and Archives department (SCA) of the academic library at Public University, a 4-year public research institution. As the manuscripts archivist, you are responsible for acquiring, managing the preservation and processing for, and assisting with reference questions on the non-institutional records collections. SCA is a hybrid repository with a broadly-written collection development policy focusing on collecting archival and rare materials documenting the city and state, the university, and supporting faculty research topics. SCA is led by a director, and there is a university archivist, a rare books librarian, a reference archivist, and an education and outreach archivist, as well as two full-time staff assistants who are available to work on projects assigned to student employees. You are currently in the process of accessioning 100 linear feet of records received in the last 20 years. The records were managed by a former archivist who managed the donation of selected records related to gas and electricity. The records primarily consist of photographs, prints and negatives of their residential and commercial buildings, and customer log books, dating from the 1950s to the 1980s. The records were received (by location and then by date) and many of the images have not been digitized. The records were used for research occasionally by archivists on behalf of individuals and organizations, such as the street, or neighborhood."

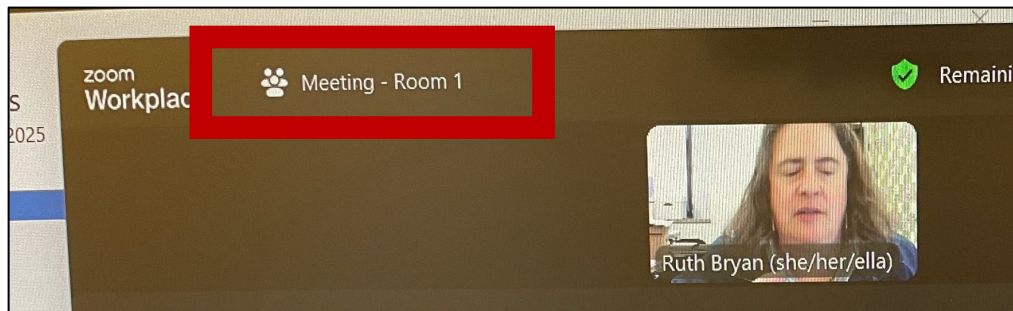
The bottom screenshot shows the "Appraisal criteria questions:" section. It contains a table with three questions and a column for notes.

Question	Notes on possible responses
1. Do the documents fall into the collection policy?	
2. Who, when, where, what? -Are the creators or compilers of the documents important or underrepresented individuals or groups within the context of the SCA documentary mission? -Are the documents old and thus especially rare or otherwise rare? -Do the documents contain information about key activities, events, locations, and actors? -Do the documents contain evidence of individual, family, or organizational planning and decisions?	
3. Is the information in the documents summarized elsewhere in other types of documents?	

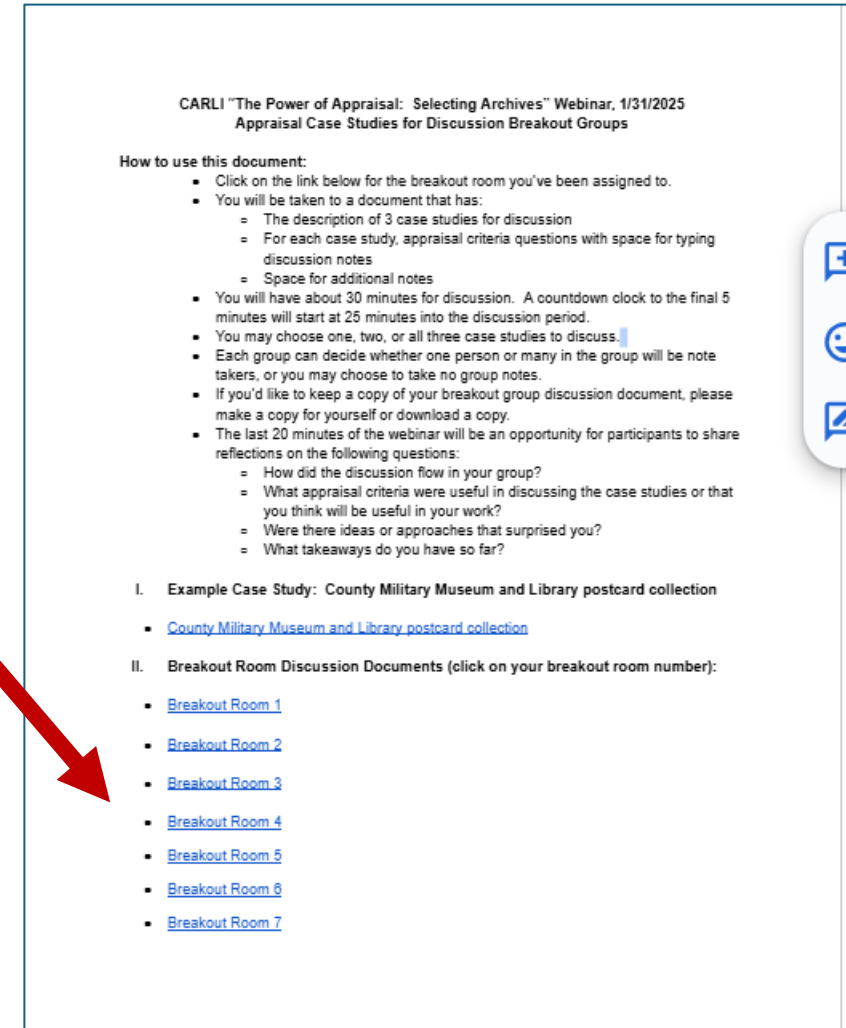
Example breakout group Google doc.

Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Central Google doc from which all the breakout room docs are linked:
- <https://bit.ly/40Exf1g>



Where meeting room number can be found (along with the link to the central Google doc)



What the central Google doc looks like. 123



Navigating the Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Has case study discussion steps
- Includes full group discussion questions

**CARLI “The Power of Appraisal: Selecting Archives” Webinar, 1/31/2025
Appraisal Case Studies for Discussion Breakout Groups**

How to use this document:

- Click on the link below for the breakout room you've been assigned to.
- You will be taken to a document that has:
 - The description of 3 case studies for discussion
 - For each case study, appraisal criteria questions with space for typing discussion notes
 - Space for additional notes
- You will have about 30 minutes for discussion. A countdown clock to the final 2 minutes will start at 28 minutes into the discussion period.
- You may choose one, two, or all three case studies to discuss.
- Each group can decide whether one person or many in the group will be note takers, or you may choose to take no group notes.
- If you'd like to keep a copy of your breakout group discussion document, please make a copy for yourself or download a copy.
- The last 30 minutes of the webinar will be an opportunity for participants to share reflections on the following questions:
 - How did the discussion flow in your group?
 - What appraisal criteria were useful in discussing the case studies or that you think will be useful in your work?
 - Were there ideas or approaches that surprised you?
 - What takeaways do you have so far?

The discussion steps in the central Google doc.

Questions about Case Study Discussion Sessions

- Go to link in the chat or here:
<https://bit.ly/40Exf1g>
- Any questions?
- Going into breakout groups now...

CARLI "The Power of Appraisal: Selecting Archives" Webinar, 1/31/2025
Appraisal Case Studies for Discussion Breakout Groups

How to use this document:

- Click on the link below for the breakout room you've been assigned to.
- You will be taken to a document that has:
 - = The description of 3 case studies for discussion
 - = For each case study, appraisal criteria questions with space for typing discussion notes
 - = Space for additional notes
- You will have about 30 minutes for discussion. A countdown clock to the final 5 minutes will start at 25 minutes into the discussion period.
- You may choose one, two, or all three case studies to discuss.
- Each group can decide whether one person or many in the group will be note takers, or you may choose to take no group notes.
- If you'd like to keep a copy of your breakout group discussion document, please make a copy for yourself or download a copy.
- The last 20 minutes of the webinar will be an opportunity for participants to share reflections on the following questions:
 - = How did the discussion flow in your group?
 - = What appraisal criteria were useful in discussing the case studies or that you think will be useful in your work?
 - = Were there ideas or approaches that surprised you?
 - = What takeaways do you have so far?

I. Example Case Study: County Military Museum and Library postcard collection

- [County Military Museum and Library postcard collection](#)

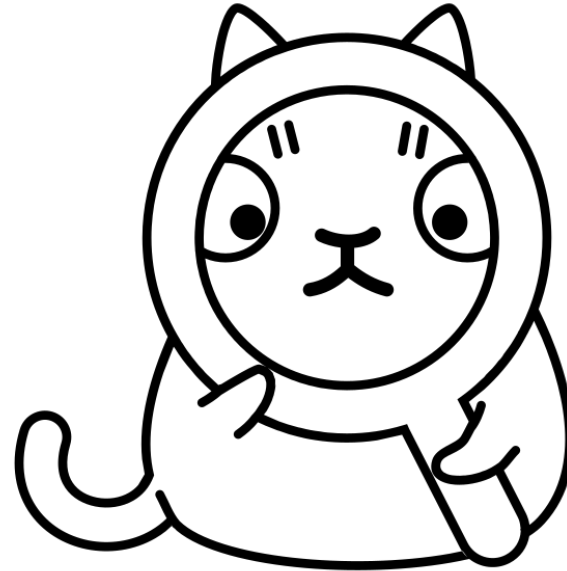
II. Breakout Room Discussion Documents (click on your breakout room number):

- [Breakout Room 1](#)
- [Breakout Room 2](#)
- [Breakout Room 3](#)
- [Breakout Room 4](#)
- [Breakout Room 5](#)
- [Breakout Room 6](#)
- [Breakout Room 7](#)

Go to this central Google doc: bit.ly/40Exf1g

Q&A

- Any unresolved questions or comments from the lecture portion of the webinar?

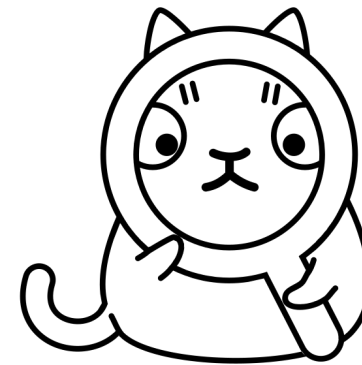


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Q&A

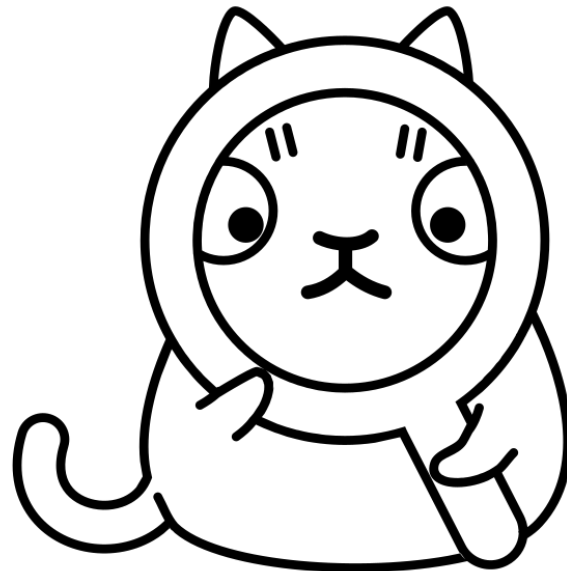
- How did the discussion flow in your group?
- Were there any case studies that were easy or difficult to work through?
- Were there any case studies that were particularly on point or far-fetched for you or for your group?



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Q&A

- What appraisal criteria were useful in discussing the case studies or that you think will be useful in your work?



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Q&A

- Were there ideas or approaches that surprised you?



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Q&A

- What takeaways do you have so far?



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Reassurance!

- You've got this!
- Ruth E. Bryan
- ruth.bryan@uky.edu
- Matt Gorzalski
- mgorz@siu.edu



Ruth with lots of stuff of history!

Resources

- Boles, Frank. *Selecting and Appraising Archives & Manuscripts*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2005.
- Daniels, Maygene F. and Timothy Walch. *A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice*. Washington, DC: National Archives and Records Service, 1984.
- Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. “[Records Retention Scheduling: A Procedural Guide](#),” 3rd Ed., November 2021.
- Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives. “[Kentucky State University Model Records Retention Schedule](#).”
- Jimerson, Randall C. *American Archival Studies: Readings in Theory and Practice*. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2000.
- Weber, Chela Scott, et al. [Total Cost of Stewardship: Responsible Collection Building in Archives and Special Collections](#). Dublin, OH: OCLC Research, 2021.

Resources

- Society of American Archivists [Accessioning, Acquisitions & Appraisal Section](#)
- Society of American Archivists [Dictionary of Archives Terminology](#).
- Society of American Archivists [Records Management Section](#).
- [Protocols for Native American Archival Materials](#)
- [Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act](#)
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