



We acknowledge that we are on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the hən̓q̓əmiñəm speaking Musqueam people.

iSchool Mission: Through innovative research, education and design, our mission is to enhance humanity's capacity to engage information in effective, creative and diverse ways.

ARST 545 Advanced Arrangement and Description – Course Syllabus (3)

Program: MAS

Year: 2021-22, Winter Term 2

Course Schedule: Wednesdays, 2:00-4:50

Location: IKBLC 461

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Douglas

Office location: IKBLC 487

Office phone: 604-827-5905

Office hours: Thursdays, 10-11 on zoom; 11:15-12:15 in person in my office (masked, please)

E-mail address: jen.douglas@ubc.ca

Learning Management Site: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/82279>

Course Goal: The goal of this course is to provide students with an in-depth understanding of classical and contemporary theories, methodologies, and models for arranging, describing and providing access to archives.

Additional information about the course: This course helps students to extend their understanding of arrangement and description as acquired in the Master of Archival Studies (MAS) core courses. In the core, we learned the history of the principles that underpin arrangement and description as well as established and accepted methodologies and standards for completing arrangement and description projects. In this course, we undertake a more critical analysis of arrangement and description principles and methods, paying special attention to how these have been challenged by and are adapting to technological and social pressures in the professional field and scholarly discipline.

FNCC specialization: The assignments in this course can serve the requirements of the First Nations Curriculum Concentration (FNCC). The primary, scaffolded assignment for this course involves identifying, understanding and exploring approaches to address a problem or issue in arrangement and description. There are numerous ways this assignment could be situated for FNCC students; students in past iterations of the course have focused, for example, on whether description can be decolonized, how land can be understood as provenance in an Indigenized descriptive program, and on reparative redescription projects, amongst other topics. If you would like to take this course for FNCC credit, please contact me to discuss this option.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:



1. Demonstrate enhanced, critical understanding of the classical literature concerning the arrangement and description of archives and contemporary interpretations of that literature [1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 4.1]
2. Distinguish and critique various contemporary perspectives and evolving ideas about the nature, purpose and implementation of archival arrangement and description. [1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 4.1]
3. Recognize and explain archival arrangement and description as social action [1.4, 5.1]
4. Appraise and critique archival descriptive standards (RAD and ICA standards) [1.2, 1.4]
5. Identify, articulate and describe current problems, issues and/or opportunities in arrangement and description [2.1, 4.1]
6. Identify, describe and assess a variety of methodological approaches to arrangement and description [1.4, 4.1]

Course Topics:

- Arrangement and description as representational acts
- Classical and contemporary perspectives on the principles that underpin archival arrangement (provenance, respect des fonds, original order)
- Challenges to established archival theories and practices
- Contemporary, evolving and emerging perspectives on and models for archival description
- Archival descriptive standards: their development, purposes, structures and effects
- Reparative description: purposes and projects

Additional course topics may include, but not be limited to:

- Indigenizing and 'decolonizing' arrangement and description
- Computational approaches to arrangement and description
- Confronting white supremacy and/or racist or offensive language in description
- Accessibility and description
- Non-narrative approaches to arrangement and description (e.g., information visualization, etc.)
- Contemporary and alternative perspectives on subject access to description
- Participatory approaches to arrangement and description
- Metadata standards as/and archival description
- Different disciplinary understandings of provenance
- Fonds-based systems vs. series-based systems

Prerequisites:

MAS and Dual students: completion of MAS core, plus 12 credits of which 6 credits must be ARST courses

MLIS students: ARST 510, ARST 515, ARST 516 or LIBR 516 and completion of the MLIS core courses, plus permission of the Graduate Adviser (Dr. Rick Kopak)

Format of the course: This course is roughly divided into two halves. In the first half, we'll discuss classical archival theory and contemporary interpretations of 'traditional' principles, theories and methodologies. We'll look at ways of framing the theory and practice of arrangement and description (including archival descriptive standards), considering arrangement and description as social action; with this framing in mind, we'll compare different systems of and models and standards for arrangement and description. This half of the class is intended to provide students with a deeper understanding of



the origins and evolution of the principles that underpin archival arrangement and description and to encourage and foster critical thinking about these principles and about the methods and standards through which arrangement and description are achieved.

In the second half of the class, the focus will be on *problems* or *issues* related to arrangement and description. In this part of the class, you will have the opportunity to explore in depth topics that are of particular interest to *you*; these may include, but do not need to be limited to, issues related to working with born-digital materials, emerging computational methods and new models for doing arrangement and description, as well as issues related to justice, equity and representation in arrangement and description. The main assignment for the course will involve you identifying and characterizing a problem or issue; identifying, locating and assessing relevant resources to understand the problem, its implications and possible solutions; and leading a seminar discussion and/or demonstration on the nature of the problem, its impact(s) on arrangement and description, and possible approaches to mitigating or solving it. This half of the course is intended to allow you to be self-directed and creative, to work collaboratively toward the success of the seminar format, and to develop enhanced critical thinking skills in a time where considerable evolution and transformation of archival theory, methods and practice is possible. Due to the scaffolded the development of the seminar presentation throughout the term, you will be well prepared for your turn to facilitate.

I understand that this course structure is daunting to some students. I have created and revised it with substantial student feedback. If you have any concerns before the course starts, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Required and Recommended Reading:

A full list of required and recommended readings will be available on Canvas. All course readings will be available through the UBC Library and/or in Library Online Course Reserves (LOCR) in Canvas.

Course Assignments:

Assignment Name	Due Date	Weight	Graduate Competencies
Annotated bibliography	February 2	20%	2.1, 4.1
Problem statement (seminar proposal)	February 16	15%	1.4, 2.1, 4.2
Seminar facilitation	In class, weeks 9-13	25%	1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1
Seminar paper	April 8	25%	1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1
Participation (Participation marks will be awarded for completion of student-led seminar peer assessments.)	Throughout	15%	2.1, 3.1, 5.1

Seminar project on an arrangement and/or description problem/issue:

The primary coursework for this class is a seminar project on an arrangement and/or description problem. There are several components to this project, which takes a problem-based approach to learning and which is intended to allow you to explore in depth a topic that is of particular interest to you and on the cutting-edge of archival theory and praxis. This project requires you to be self-directed and creative, and to work collaboratively toward the success of the seminar format.

In a time when considerable evolution and transformation of archival theory, methods and practice is possible, this assignment asks you to think critically about current ideas and practice; to identify and



characterize problems and issues; to identify, locate and critically evaluate relevant sources; and to propose original, creative and potentially achievable solutions.

Component parts of the project (described in detail below) build upon each other. Essentially, for this seminar project, you will:

- compile an annotated bibliography of relevant resources to the investigation of your issue/problem;
- draft a problem statement outlining the nature of the arrangement and description issue/problem your seminar will address and explaining its significance (i.e. why it is a problem that needs to be studied);
- lead a class seminar introducing your issue/problem; and
- write a final paper that fully contextualizes the issue/problem and considers how it is being or could be addressed.

You will be able to choose a topic from a sample list I've created, or to develop your own topic. Class time will be allotted to brainstorm and collaboratively develop these topics.

COMPONENTS OF THE SEMINAR PROJECT TO COMPLETE:

I. Annotated bibliography (individual, partner or small group submission)

The first component of the seminar project is an annotated bibliography. Your annotated bibliography should provide citations for ~15 relevant articles, books, book chapters, reports, standards, blog posts, websites, etc. on your chosen topic. The types of resources that are relevant will vary by topic.

The sources should help you to:

- i) Understand, contextualize, and describe the problem/issue you've identified in the Problem Statement and
- ii) Start to think about how the problem/issue might be addressed.

For each citation, provide an annotation of 2-3 paragraphs that includes:

- A brief summary of the source, highlighting its salient points
- An explanation of how it helps you understand the problem/issue AND/OR how it helps you think about how the problem/issue might be addressed
- Note of any particular strengths or weaknesses of the source
- As relevant, an explanation of how it relates to other sources (i.e. does it build on an argument introduced in another article? Does it refute an argument? Does it provide more information on a particular aspect of the topic covered in another source? Etc.)

*****Note:** You need not restrict your overall research to the resources listed in the bibliography. The annotated bibliography is considered to be part of a process and it is likely that you will continue to discover useful and important resources as you continue to prepare your seminar and final paper.

Weight: 20%

Evaluation criteria: Your bibliography will be evaluated based on the relevancy of the sources you include; the clarity, conciseness, and informativeness of your annotations; and your demonstrated ability to make connections between different sources.

II. Problem statement (individual, partner or small group submission)



The second component of the seminar project is a problem statement.

The problem statement consists of an initial outline of the problem/issue you wish to investigate in your seminar project, based on your choice of skeleton problem. Your problem statement should be approximately 750-1000 words (3-4 pages) and should include the following elements:

- An explanation of the context/background of the issue/problem you will examine;
- An explanation of the specific issue/problem you will examine, including *why* it is important to study;
- An explanation of the types of resources you will consult to better understand the issue/problem and to help you consider how it might be addressed/resolved.
- If relevant, please also include a short statement regarding any obstacles or difficulties you think you might encounter (e.g. difficulty locating relevant resources; significant controversies related to the issue/problem, etc.)

Problem statements will be workshopped in class before submission. Participation marks will be awarded for this activity.

Weight: 15%

Evaluation criteria: Your problem statement will be evaluated based on your ability to clearly and concisely (1) state the nature of the issue/problem and (2) explain why the issue/problem is significant and should be studied. The completeness and overall clarity of the statement will also be assessed (i.e. are all elements listed above completed and clearly articulated?).

III. Seminar facilitation (individual, partner or small group component)

As the next stage in the seminar project, you and your partner or small group will lead a seminar and discussion on your chosen issue/problem.

Your seminar should provide a thorough introduction to and discussion of your issue/problem. I would like you to:

- Introduce your issue/problem (provide background/context and explain the issue/problem)
- Identify and define any specific terminology or concepts as relevant and necessary
- Outline any significant controversies, debates, or issues related to your issue/problem as relevant and necessary
- Situate and contextualize readings as relevant
- Outline the past, present and future of your issue/problem as you see it (i.e. how was the issue/problem manifest in the past? What did archivists think about it? What did they do about it? What is the current state of affairs? What will or should happen next?)
- Identify specific questions for class discussion

You will also be responsible for facilitating a discussion following your seminar. Be prepared with questions and commentary that can guide discussion, especially if it falters at any point.

One week prior to your seminar you **MUST** distribute to the class:

- Your problem statement (you can feel free to edit the marked and returned version as you like and see necessary)
- 2 readings on your issue/problem, chosen to help contextualize your seminar and permit your classmates to engage in discussion



On the day of your seminar you **MUST** send me so that I can distribute to the class:

- A bibliography of sources used to prepare your seminar
- Copies of slides

Weight: 25%

Evaluation criteria: Seminar facilitation will be evaluated based on how clearly and completely you introduce your issue/problem (including the background/context of the issue/problem, the significance of the issue/problem, your analysis of the issue/problem/ and your proposed means of addressing it); and your demonstrated preparedness in guiding and encouraging discussion. As I assess the seminar facilitation of each small group, I will take into account the fact that students who present earlier in the term will have had less time to prepare.

IV. Final paper on your seminar topic (individual submission)

The final component of this assignment requires each individual student to write a final paper on the issue/problem you've focused on throughout the term. I'm asking you to write on the same issue/problem you present on as I think there are insufficient opportunities in the MAS program to engage in extended thought on a particular topic and/or to reflect on and respond to feedback. You should find that because you have worked on the problem throughout the term, and have progressed through the problem statement, annotated bibliography, and seminar facilitation, with time along the way for discussion and feedback, a good deal of the work involved in planning and researching a final paper will be complete: in this case, the final paper is an opportunity to bring all of that work together.

Though the paper will build on your seminar facilitation, it is not – strictly speaking – a seminar report; it should instead be structured and written as an academic paper and should reflect continued work and consideration beyond your seminar introduction.

Length: 12-15 pages (12-pt font, double spaced, default margins)

Weight: 25%

Evaluation criteria: Your paper will be evaluated based on the depth and breadth of your coverage of your chosen topic; the thoughtfulness and insightfulness of your analysis; and the clarity and coherence of your written expression.

Course Schedule:

Topic	Date
Introductions: to the course and to each other Review of Arrangement and Descriptions as Discussed in ARST 515	WEEK 1: January 12
Frameworks for Thinking about Arrangement and Description as Representational Activity and with Social Impacts and Consequences Problem Statement Workshop (1): Identifying problems	WEEK 2: January 19
Classical Archival Theory: a Closer Look, or Metaphors, Origin Stories and Why they Matter	WEEK 3: January 26



<p>Evolving Ideas about the Principle of Provenance: Context, Hospitality, Imagining</p>	<p>WEEK 4: February 2</p>
<p>Evolving Ideas about the Principle of Provenance: Webs, Granules, Machines and other Models for Provenance in a Digital World</p> <p>Problem Statement Workshop (2): Defining and describing problems</p>	<p>WEEK 5: February 9</p>
<p>What Do Finding Aids Do? What Don't They Do? What Can They Do and What Can't They?: Positioning Archival Description as a Rhetorical Genre</p> <p>Reparative Description and Redescription</p> <p>*In addition to this week's readings, please consider watching the Native American Archives Section (NAAS) webinar on "Implementing Reparative Description for Indigenous Collections" (recorded May 26, 2021): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CstBluKi7Ss</p> <p>In-class activity: Comparing Archival Descriptive Standards, their Structures, Aims and Effects</p>	<p>WEEK 6: February 16</p>
<p>READING WEEK – NO CLASS</p>	<p>WEEK 7: February 23</p>
<p>Insider/outsider Perceptions of Arrangement and Description: User Studies and Experiences</p> <p>In-class activity: Assessment of Online Description</p>	<p>WEEK 8: March 2</p>
<p>TBD*: Student-led seminars</p>	<p>WEEK 9: March 9</p>
<p>TBD: Student-led seminars</p>	<p>WEEK 10: March 16</p>
<p>TBD: Student-led seminars</p>	<p>WEEK 11: March 23</p>
<p>TBD: Student-led seminars</p>	<p>WEEK 12: March 30</p>
<p>TBD: Student-led seminars (if needed)</p> <p>Course wrap up: Ongoing and developing themes and trends in arrangement and description, or Where do we go from here?</p>	<p>WEEK 13: April 6</p>

*TBD= to be decided



COVID-19 Safety: You are required to wear a non-medical mask during our class meetings, for your own protection and the safety and comfort of everyone else in the class. For our in-person meetings in this class, it is important that all of us feel as comfortable as possible engaging in class activities while sharing an indoor space. Non-medical masks that cover our noses and mouths are a primary tool for combating the spread of COVID-19. Further, according to the provincial mandate, masks are required in all indoor public spaces including lobbies, hallways, stairwells, elevators, classrooms and labs. There may be students who have medical accommodations for not wearing a mask. Please maintain a respectful environment. [UBC Respectful Environment Statement](#).

Attendance: As we are still in the midst of a global pandemic, and while we are all required by BC public health orders to stay home if sick, I expect that there will be absences. **If you are sick, it is important that you stay home.** Complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you will miss a class and we will work together to be sure your absence does not negatively affect your learning or performance in the class. In this class, the marking scheme is intended to provide flexibility so that you can prioritize your health and still succeed.

If you miss a class because of illness:

- Make a connection early in the term to another student or a group of students in the class. You can help each other by sharing notes. You can use the discussion forum in Canvas to help to connect with other students.
- Consult class resources on Canvas. All slides, handouts, activity materials, etc. will be posted there each week.
- A class recording may be available. We will discuss this in the first week of class.
- Use the discussion forum for help. This can be a great space to work together to understand new ideas we discuss in class. I can pop in there and answer questions, too.
- Attend office hours.

This class has a significant participation mark that is assessed based on participation in and completion of in-class activities that help to reinforce specific course learning objectives. Please contact me as soon as possible when you know you will miss an activity (these are indicated on the week-by-week course schedule) and we will make a plan to ensure you do not miss out on the learning these activities facilitate and can earn participation marks in an alternate way.

If I am ill: If I am unwell, I will not come to class. I will make every reasonable attempt to communicate plans for class as soon as possible (by email and through Canvas announcements). Our classroom will still be available for you to sit in and attend an online session, if one is offered. If I stay home due to illness:

- I may ask you to do an activity, read something additional, watch a webinar or listen to a podcast
- I may post recorded lectures from last year's ARST 515 class in Canvas and ask you to complete activities in the discussion forums
- If I am well enough to teach but am taking precautions to avoid infecting others we may hold the class online. If this happens, you will receive an email and an announcement via Canvas with instructions on how to join the online session.



Evaluation: All assignments will be marked using the evaluative criteria given on the [iSchool web site](#).

Late assignments:

If you find yourself in need of an extension for an assignment, please contact me *as soon as possible* by email or in office hours to make arrangements.

While I am willing to consider extensions, and especially as we all continue to experience the effects of the Covid19 global pandemic in different ways, please remember that assignment deadlines are there in part to help you manage your time; the core involves meeting many different deadlines, and consideration of your overall workload and ability to complete the term should be part of any of your thinking about an extension. Ideally, extensions should only be used in cases of illness, emergency or other unavoidable situation, but please contact me if at any point you are running into trouble with deadlines and assignments.

Missed in-class assessments:

Students, staff and faculty are advised to stay home if they are sick (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restart#step-four>). If you need to miss a class where there is an in-class activity listed in the course timetable, please contact me *as soon as possible* so that we can determine how you can a) achieve the learning objectives the activity relates to and b) when relevant, earn assigned marks. Since types of in-class activities vary considerably, different solutions will be required depending on the activity that is missed. We will work this out on a case-by-case basis; no one will be penalized for following Public Health Office guidance.

Required Materials: All required materials will be made available to you via the UBC Library Catalogue or Online Course Reserves through Canvas. There are no costs for materials associated with this course. If at any point you have trouble accessing course readings, please let me know right away so I can help.

Academic Concession: If you miss marked coursework for the first time (assignment, exam, presentation, participation in class) and the course is still in-progress, **speak with me immediately** to find a solution for your missed coursework. Any concessions that will result in a change to the student record (such as late withdrawal from the course) will be referred to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for evaluation. If this is not the first time you have requested concession or classes are over, please consult the [Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies' webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact me where appropriate.

Policies and Resources to Support Student Success: UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious and cultural observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions. Details of the policies and how to access support are available here (<https://senate.ubc.ca/policies-resources-support-student-success>)

Academic Integrity: The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of



conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the [UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline](#). Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, and self-plagiarism <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959> (§7)

UBC instructors/faculty, must report all incidents of suspected academic misconduct.

“Every case of academic misconduct, whether in coursework, comprehensive exams, a thesis, or a dissertation, must be brought forward to the Dean (or designated Associate Dean) of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.” <https://www.grad.ubc.ca/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/dealing-academic-misconduct-graduate-students>

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations must register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#) (previously known as Access & Diversity). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy LR7: Accommodation for Students with Disabilities \(Joint Senate and Board Policy\)](#). Academic accommodations are not determined by your instructors, and instructors should not ask you about the nature of your disability or ongoing medical condition, or request copies of your disability documentation. However, your instructor may consult with the Centre for Accessibility should the accommodations affect the essential learning outcomes of a course.

Other Course Policies:

Pronouns and Names: I will do my best to treat all students with respect in this course. I will gladly learn to pronounce your name correctly and honour your request to address you by a name different than what appears on the class list. I will also create opportunities for students to share their pronouns if they wish to do so. I use she/her pronouns and you are perfectly welcome to call me Jennifer. If you find it easier to address me more formally, that is also just fine.

Course Use of Canvas: We will use Canvas as a repository for course materials and information about assignments and as a means of communicating with each other:

- Each week lecture slides and other class materials will be posted to Canvas
- Course readings that are not available online directly through the UBC catalogue or otherwise will be made available to you through the online course reserves, which you can access through Canvas
- I will use Canvas announcements to communicate with you outside of class, so please ensure you have notifications turned on to receive announcements
- You are welcome at any time to use the course discussion forum to chat about concepts, follow up on class discussions, share archives stories, etc.



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- There is also a course q&a discussion thread that you can use to ask general questions about the course format, requirements and expectations, assignments, etc.; I will check this thread regularly
- Assignments will be submitted and returned through Canvas

Office hours and contacting me: I'll hold regular weekly office hours [with one office hour on zoom and one office hour in-person, in my office (masks required)]; if over time we discover that one option is far more popular than the other, I might decide to alter this schedule to adjust to student preferences. The link for zoom office hours can be found on the Canvas course home page. A waiting room is enabled for the meeting. Zoom office hours will be group drop-in style; we can also use breakout rooms to speak one-on-one when requested (don't hesitate to request it!).

You can come to office hours with questions about assignments, or about the course more generally, or even if you just want to pop in and say hi and have a chat. If the scheduled office hours are at a time that doesn't work for you, please feel free to email me to set up an alternate time. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns about the course or about your own performance. These days, I receive a high volume of email. I will try to respond to emails within 24 hours; if you haven't heard from me within 48 hours please don't hesitate to re-send your message.

A Note on Reference Style: Archival studies is a trans- and interdisciplinary area of study. As such, there is no default referencing style associated with the field. Preferred styles include APA, MLA and Chicago. You are free to choose an accepted reference style; please use it consistently and accurately!

Covid19 In-Person Teaching and Contingency Planning

As I write this, there remains considerable uncertainty regarding Covid19 and the new omicron variant. As directed by the university, the plan is for full in-person teaching in the Faculty of Arts for all classes that are designated in the UBC Calendar as in-person classes. If the situation changes, we will adapt. We will discuss some contingency planning in the first week of class and will keep lines of communication open on this matter throughout the term. Please feel free to contact me if you have concerns.