



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: Winter 2020-21, Term 1

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

Location: N/A

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Douglas (she/her)

Office location: IKBLC 487

Office phone: 604-827-5905

Office hours: Regular online office hours TBD; students will also be able to make appointments to meet if scheduled office hours are not feasible

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

Learning Management Site: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/34825>

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.

FNCC specialization: The assignments in this course can serve the requirements of the First Nations Curriculum Concentration (FNCC). 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:

- Classical and contemporary theories of archival arrangement (provenance, respect des fonds, original order)
- Contemporary evolving and emerging perspectives on and models for archival description
- Archival descriptive standards and their development
- Archival representation
- Description as rhetorical genre
- Descriptive systems as online interfaces

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

- Indigenizing and decolonizing arrangement and description
- Computational approaches to arrangement and description
- Confronting white supremacism and/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. Lisa Nathan)

Format of the course: Adapting to the 2020 Covid19 global pandemic crisis, the course this year will consist of both synchronous and asynchronous elements. We will meet synchronously (using Collaborate Ultra in Canvas) for a shorter-than-usual period each week (1-1.5 hours), during which there will be different combinations of short lectures, class and group discussions, group activities and – in the second half of term – student-led seminars. Asynchronous elements of the course will supplement the synchronous activities; these will include recorded lectures, discussion forums, and hands-on activities.

As in other years, the 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 development of the seminar presentation throughout the term, you will be well prepared for your turn to facilitate, and in recognition of the different capacities and comfort levels students are working with in the online environment, you will be able to choose from a variety of methods for leading your seminar (e.g., presenting 'live' in Collaborate; prerecording video or audio presentations; etc.).

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	October 7	20%	2.1, 4.1
Problem statement (seminar proposal)	October 21	15%	1.4, 2.1, 4.2
Seminar facilitation	TBD [Weeks 8-13]	25%	1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1
Seminar paper		25%	1.4, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 4.2, 5.1
Participation (Participation marks will be awarded for completion of specific in-class exercises and tasks, and for completion of student-led seminar peer assessments.)	Throughout	15%	2.1, 3.1, 5.1

Course Schedule:

Topic	Date
Introductions: to the course and to each other	WEEK 1: September 9
Frameworks for Thinking about Arrangement and Description as Representational Activity and as Social Action	WEEK 2: September 16



Classical Archival Theory: a Closer Look, or Metaphors, Origin Stories and Why they Matter	WEEK 3: September 23
Evolving Ideas about the Principle of Provenance: Context, Hospitality, Imagining	WEEK 4: September 30
Evolving Ideas about the Principle of Provenance: Webs, Granules and other Models for Provenance in a Digital World	WEEK 5: October 7
What Do Finding Aids Do? Positioning Archival Description as a Rhetorical Genre and Why We'd Bother to Do So!	WEEK 6: October 14
Insider/outsider Perceptions of Arrangement and Description, and Assessment of Online Description	WEEK 7: October 21
TBD*: Student-led seminars	WEEK 8: October 28
TBD: Student-led seminars	WEEK 9: November 4
NO CLASS: Remembrance Day	WEEK 10: November 11
TBD: Student-led seminars	WEEK 11: November 18
TBD: Student-led seminars	WEEK 12: November 25
TBD: Student-led seminars	WEEK 13: December 2
Course wrap up: Ongoing and developing themes and trends in arrangement and description, or <i>Where do we go from here?</i>	

*TBD= to be decided

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.

Group Work:

When I have taught this class in the past, the seminar project has been partly a group project and partly an individual project. The first three parts of the project (annotated bibliography; problem statement; seminar facilitation) were completed in pairs or small groups, depending on the size of the class, while each individual student completed a final paper that allowed them to put their own spin on the topic. I would like to run the seminar projects in the same way this term, but also appreciate that students are



working in constrained circumstances with care responsibilities, lack of adequate work space, extra stress and anxiety, etc. For these reasons, group work will be an option this term. You may choose to work on this project individually, in pairs or in groups of three. For those who choose to work in groups, I can make recommendations to facilitate collaboration and work efficiently. You can choose your groups or ask me to help you find a group. All of these logistics will be discussed in the first class meeting and we will aim to have them sorted out as quickly as possible. How groups are formed (or not formed) will affect the way the student-led seminar sessions are organized and scheduled; as soon as we have the details worked out together, I will post a schedule amendment to the syllabus with more details about weeks 8 to 13.

Attendance:

I hope everyone can attend all synchronous meetings, but I also understand that this semester is highly unusual and that some of you – many of you? all of you? – are trying to attend class around caregiving and other responsibilities and stresses. If you know in advance that you can't attend a class, please try to let me know. And even if you can't let me know in advance, please do make sure to be in touch so that I can ensure you have any missed materials and understand concepts or methods discussed in class. When we get to the student-led seminars part of class, in the second half of the term, you will be asked to complete peer assessments for some of the seminars; if you have to miss a class where you were scheduled to complete a peer assessment, let me know and we can make alternate arrangements.

Evaluation: Assignments will be marked using the iSchool's [evaluative criteria](#). 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. Assignment deadlines are set to the Vancouver time zone, so be sure you check the timezone app in Canvas.

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.

Keep Learning: You, your instructors, and peers are all figuring out how to teach and learn in a fully online environment. This transition comes with expected and unexpected challenges and means your learning may not look or feel like what you expect. Know that you are not alone in navigating these changes. UBC is an exceptional community doing all we can to support one another. The Keep Learning website (<https://keeplearning.ubc.ca>) compiles resources to help you set up, learn effectively online, understand the technologies used at UBC, take care of yourself, answer questions, and get support in this new context.

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>)

Centre for Accessibility: Centre for Accessibility works with the University to create an inclusive living and learning environment in which all students can thrive. The University accommodates students with



disabilities who have registered with the Centre for Accessibility unit: [<https://students.ubc.ca/about-student-services/centre-for-accessibility>]. You must register with the Disability Resource Centre to be granted special accommodations for any on-going conditions.

Religious Accommodation: The University accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably in the first week of class, if you will require any accommodation on these grounds. Students who plan to be absent for family obligations, or other similar commitments, cannot assume they will be accommodated, and should discuss with the instructor before the course drop date. UBC policy on Religious Holidays: <http://equity.ubc.ca/days-of-significance-calendar/>

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism

The Faculty of Arts considers plagiarism to be the most serious academic offence that a student can commit. Regardless of whether or not it was committed intentionally, plagiarism has serious academic consequences and can result in expulsion from the university. Plagiarism involves the improper use of somebody else's words or ideas in one's work. The UBC policy on Academic Misconduct is available here: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/Vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,959>.

It is your responsibility to make sure you fully understand what plagiarism is. Many students who think they understand plagiarism do in fact commit what UBC calls "reckless plagiarism." The UBC Learning Commons has a resource page on how to avoid plagiarism, with policies on academic integrity and misconduct found here: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoid-plagiarism/>

If after reading these materials you still are unsure about how to properly use sources in your work, please ask your instructor for clarification.