

## UNLV Special Collections and Archives 2019 Archival Processing Metrics Survey

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries Special Collections and Archives is studying how archival processing metrics (including the hours of labor required to process each linear/cubic foot) are gathered and used by our colleagues. We plan to publish our findings in an open access journal in 2020. This is an informal opinion poll. It seeks the perspectives of individuals (not their institutions). We encourage more than one person from an institution to individually complete this survey.

If you do not collect and/or assess processing metrics, your perspective is very relevant and important to our research. The survey will require only 5 minutes of your time.

If you do collect and/or assess processing metrics, we greatly value your insights. The survey will require 10-15 minutes of your time (if you answer all optional free text questions).

In the context of this survey, "processing" is defined as: actions performed on archival material from the time of accessioning to the point it is described online (in any way) and available to researchers (in person or online), and any actions performed to further describe it or bring up to current standards (i.e. additional processing). It does not include acquisition or digitization. For the sake of simplicity, the survey uses the terms "collection" or "archival material" throughout. However, the survey questions apply to institutional records, manuscripts, and all other archival formats, including born-digital materials.

This survey is anonymous. The form does not automatically record email or IP addresses. You will have the option to manually add your institutional affiliation and/or contact information at the end of the survey.

### **Q1 Repository/institution type** (*Select one*)

- Academic library/archives
- Cultural heritage institution (independent gardens, galleries, museums, etc.)
- Corporate archives
- Government library/archives (federal, state, county, city)
- Public library/archives
- Historical society
- Religious library/archives
- Medical library/archives
- Community archives
- Research facility (STEM)
- K-12 school library/archives
- Other (*free text*)

### **Q2 Archival processing metrics are often supported by preliminary surveys, guidelines for processing levels, and other tools that provide frameworks for assessment. What methods/tools/resources has your repository used to collect and/or assess archival collections data?** (*Please check all that apply*)

- None
- Locally developed tools
- Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries
- Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries (PACSL) Surveying and Minimal Processing Manual

- Archival Metrics Toolkit (University of Michigan School of Information)
- Processing Metrics Collaborative: Database Development Initiative (Harvard Medical School Countway Library)
- Other (*free text*)

**Q3 Please comment upon and/or share links to any tools you have used that are freely available:**  
(*Optional*)

**Q4 In the unit/repository where I work, we...** (*Select one*)

- Have never collected processing metrics
- Collect and assess processing metrics routinely as part of ongoing operations (including projects)
- Collect and assess processing metrics only for specific projects (including grant projects)
- Are in an early stage of collecting and assessing processing metrics as part of ongoing operations
- May have collected processing metrics in the past (not sure)
- Collect processing metrics on an individual basis, but we do not aggregate or assess them as a unit/repository
- Collected processing metrics as a pilot project, but did not sustain the effort

**Q5 In your opinion, what are the primary reasons that your unit/repository does not collect and assess processing metrics?** (*Please check all that apply*)

- Understaffed
- Lack of established guidelines/framework
- Too time-consuming
- Lack of institutional/administrative support
- Other (*free text*)

**Q6 Metrics can inform various activities and decisions. In what ways are archival processing metrics used at your repository?** (*Please check all that apply.*)

- Inform processing priorities
- Inform archival workflows/processes
- Forecast need and/or advocate for more archival staff
- Forecast need for archival supplies
- Plan and propose grants or other special projects
- Track and manage grants or other special projects
- Inform budget planning/management
- Inform strategic planning
- Demonstrate cost to process a single collection/donation/acquisition
- Inform which processing staff or teams are best suited for particular tasks/collections
- Demonstrate and articulate value of archival program to stakeholders (reports, outreach, etc.)
- Evaluate individual processors' performance
- Forecast and/or advocate for additional physical space
- Motivate/celebrate staff by demonstrating group/unit progress
- Other (*free text*)

**Q7 Does your unit/repository collect metrics specific to born-digital processing?**

- No
- Yes
- Not sure
- Other (*free text*)

**Q8 Do you have any additional comments on how processing metrics have proven valuable in your experience? (*Optional*)**

**Q9 Approximately how often do you (or your unit) assess processing data for internal purposes (e.g., to inform operations, workflows, teamwork, priorities, project management, etc.)?**

- Annually
- Quarterly
- Twice per year
- Every two months
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily
- Not sure

**Q10 Approximately how often do you (or your unit) use processing data to support external reports or communications with administrators, stakeholders, donors, or funding agencies?**

- Annually
- Quarterly
- Twice per year
- Every two months
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily
- Not sure

**Q11 If you were to simplify data collection and assessment, reducing the focus to core data points, which of the following data points do you consider essential? (*Rate the importance of each data point using the provided scale of 1 to 3.*)**

- Collection title and/or number/identifier
- Collection dates
- Collection creator name
- Collection creator type (corporate, university, family papers, personal papers, etc.)
- Extent (physical and digital, pre-processing and post-processing)
- Predominant material formats (textual records, manuscripts, visual/graphic materials, audiovisual, born-digital)
- Complexity of collection prior to processing (Disorganized? Wide variety of subjects? Conservation challenges? Uniformity vs heterogeneity of materials?)
- Historical/institutional/research value of collection
- Project name or funding source (including grants)
- Level of processing performed (e.g., collection level, series level, folder level, item level, etc.)

- Type of processing performed (e.g., baseline processing at time of accessioning, re-processing legacy collection, iterative/extensible processing to enhance)
- Total processing hours
- Average processing rate (volume of material processed per hour)
- Date processing was completed
- Name(s) of processor(s)
- Role of the processor (professional archivist, paraprofessional staff, graduate intern, undergraduate student assistant, etc.)
- Solo or team effort
- Experience or skill level of processor (processing expert or novice, subject expert, etc.)
- Language of materials

**Q12 Are there any other essential data points you would recommend adding to this list? Why?**  
*(Optional)*

**Q13 For any data point you rated not at all important (1), please explain your rationale.** *(Optional)*

**Q14 Some repositories collect detailed data on specific processing tasks. The actions below are important components that add up to "Total processing time," yet the actions may or may not warrant individual assessment. In your environment, which of the following processing actions do you consider important enough to track as separate data points?** *(Rate the importance of each data point using the provided scale of 1 to 3.)*

- Research the collection/creator
- Conducting preliminary collection survey
- Creating processing plans
- Performing appraisal and deaccessioning
- Reviewing materials for sensitive/restricted items
- Creating collection inventory
- Creating collection context (historical/biographical note, scope and contents notes, abstract, assigning names/subjects)
- Editing/revising new description (your own or that of your colleagues)
- Performing physical/digital arrangement
- Housing materials (routine sleeving, foldering, re-boxing, etc.)
- Intensive conservation treatment (creating preservation copies, removing damaging fasteners, repairing paper, humidifying, flattening, creating custom-made enclosures)
- Logistics (building boxes, labeling boxes, barcoding boxes, paging/retrieving and storing materials, managing locations)
- Distinguish between rates for processing born-digital vs physical archives
- Reformatting (AV, digital files, etc.) to create access/service copies
- Performing actions that result in online discovery (e.g., creating/uploading EAD, MARC, blog posts, PDFs, or any action that places collection description online)

**Q15 For any of the points you rated as essential (3), please explain how that data point would be useful to you.** *(Optional)*

**Q16 If you believe it is useful to break down any of these data points into still more granular points, please note the point/action, how you would parse it into more detailed data points, and how that information would be useful to you. (Optional)**

**Q17 Are there any other essential data points you would recommend adding to this list? (Optional)**

**Q18 Are there any additional comments you would like to share? (Optional)**