

Anna Elise Allison. Connecting Undergraduates with Primary Sources: A Study of Undergraduate Instruction in Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections. A Master's Paper for the M.S. in L.S degree. April, 2005. 72 pages. Advisor: Barbara B. Moran

This study presents the results of a mail survey of archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments in United States universities with membership in the Association of Research Libraries. The survey examined the nature and extent of instruction that these departments provide for undergraduate classes. It also addressed other instructional services accessible to undergraduates and the impact of undergraduate use on these departments and their collections.

The survey produced eighty-five usable responses. The majority of participants reported that their department provides classroom instruction for undergraduates. Their responses show that undergraduate instruction sessions are usually conducted for small classes, are often related to a specific course assignment, and generally address the nature of primary sources and department procedures for using original materials. While many departments find their space and staff stretched by increasing undergraduate use, most respondents felt that the challenges and benefits of serving undergraduates are worthwhile.

Headings:

Archives -- Reference services

Bibliographic instruction -- College and university students

Surveys -- Bibliographic instruction

Surveys -- Special collections

CONNECTING UNDERGRADUATES WITH PRIMARY SOURCES:
A STUDY OF UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTION IN ARCHIVES,
MANUSCRIPTS, AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

by
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A Master's paper submitted to the faculty
of the School of Information and Library Science
of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Science in
Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

April 2005

Approved by

Barbara B. Moran

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the many librarians and archivists around the country who responded to my survey. Their interest and enthusiasm are much appreciated.

I am thankful to Laura Clark Brown for clarifying the issues involved in instruction in this field and for her contributions to the construction of my survey. I would also like to thank Lisa Norberg, Kim Vassiliadis, Rachel Canada, Michelle Mascaro, and Matthew Turi for pre-testing the survey.

Finally, thanks to my advisor, Dr. Barbara B. Moran, for her assistance with this project. I have truly appreciated her guidance and support throughout my graduate studies.

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Introduction

Recent decades have witnessed a growing emphasis on user education in academic libraries. Library user education, also called library instruction or bibliographic instruction, teaches students “how to make the most effective use of the library system” (Tiefel 1995, 319). The instructional services offered by academic libraries include orientation sessions, open houses, workshops, online tutorials, and course-related or course-integrated instruction sessions. In addition to providing an introduction to search strategies and resources, current library instruction programs seek to teach students critical thinking and information literacy skills that will be useful throughout their lifetimes.

The scholarly literature reflects the increased focus on library instruction with a growing body of research on student library skills, library instruction programs, and instructional techniques. But while library instruction has been a subject of scholarly discussion for decades, few articles address user education in archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments at colleges and universities. In this environment user education most often takes place during the one-on-one reference interview, but it can also be provided through “educational sessions offered by a repository. Although basic manuals ... promote these sessions, little has been written about the actual curricular content of user education classes” (Yakel 2002, 119).

While archivists and manuscript librarians can certainly learn much from the literature on library instruction, user education in the archival environment requires separate treatment because of the unique issues surrounding original materials. Since archival materials are arranged, described, and accessed differently from library materials, the knowledge and skills needed to use them differ in many ways from basic library skills and are not widely understood.

Few users have experience with primary sources, and most are unprepared for the complexity of archival sources, finding aids, and archival practice. Most have no experience integrating and understanding the undigested mass of information so often found in primary sources. Although every schoolchild is taught how to use library classification and catalogs, many archival users have never encountered archival arrangement and archival finding aids. Many users need instruction to understand primary sources and the finding aids that describe them (Pugh 1992, 7).

Studies of archival reference inquiries and more formal user studies have substantiated these points.

In her 2002 article entitled “Listening to Users,” Elizabeth Yakel examined the perspectives and experiences of archives users through qualitative interviews. Although most of her subjects had some experience with primary research, Yakel discovered that many did not understand the nature of archives and were unfamiliar with basic archival terminology. She asserted that “archival user education is also a lifelong process,” arguing that even experienced users need occasional reinforcement of information about seldom used resources and that they should be explicitly notified of changes in access systems and the availability of new resources (120).

Yakel proposed increased user education, including classroom instruction, to produce a better informed patron-base for archival repositories, and she advocated incorporating archival instruction earlier in the educational curriculum. However, she

found it difficult to make more recommendations because the literature provides no guidance on teaching archival concepts and operations through classroom instruction sessions. As she stated, “a broader delineation of the scope and content of the archival user education curriculum is not occurring in the literature” (119).

The dearth of literature on instruction in archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments at colleges and universities suggests that these departments have been slower to implement instructional programs than their main libraries. Their resources and services may be underutilized by the group that should be their primary clientele, their own students. Course-based classroom instruction for undergraduates should be an integral part of the public services programs of these departments. Instruction sessions involving original materials present a unique opportunity to develop students’ critical thinking skills by encouraging them to make their own interpretations of primary sources. Such instructional programs play an important role in fulfilling the department’s educational mission, creating better informed users, and fostering future support for archival repositories.

The need for archival user education and the lack of literature on this subject lead to the following research questions: To what extent do archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments at major research institutions provide interactive instruction for their undergraduates? What are the format and content of classroom instruction sessions for undergraduates? How does undergraduate use impact these departments and their collections? And what additional instructional techniques and services could improve undergraduate education?

This study addresses these questions through the results of a mail survey of archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments in United States universities with membership in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). The results provide insight into the unique nature and challenges of undergraduate instruction in this environment, and they show the real benefits of promoting undergraduate use of original materials. The first-hand testimony of professionals in the field suggests needs and opportunities for studying and expanding instructional services that encourage undergraduates to interact with primary sources.

Literature Review

Instruction in Academic Libraries

Library instruction has a history of over 150 years in the United States. During this time fundamental changes in higher education, such as new teaching methods, growing numbers of academic libraries, and technological innovations, have had a significant impact on libraries and their instructional programs. As librarianship has evolved, library instruction has experienced periods of growth and decline with shifts in the focus of the field.

The earliest instruction took the form of library lectures, and in the late 1800s several academic librarians introduced courses in bibliography that included instruction in library use. Course-related instruction was occasionally mentioned, but the idea did not take hold. The key issues underpinning instruction were articulated by library leaders in the late nineteenth century. They identified three primary objectives: developing critical judgment, training independent learners, and fostering lifelong learning (Tucker 1979). These goals are still the foundation of library instruction and have recently been synthesized in the concept of information literacy (Tiefel 1995, 320).

Early twentieth century literature on library instruction reflects a shift from educating students about using materials for research to teaching them how to access library resources (Tiefel 1995, 322). Otherwise, library instruction experienced little change during the first six decades of the century. Evan Farber states that “the emphasis

on activities that supported graduate and faculty research rather than on those relating to undergraduate education” contributed to this lack of development (Farber 1999, 172).

Interest in library instruction began to reemerge in the 1960s. In that decade and the next one library instruction “focused on access skills and bibliographic tools. ... With the arrival of the 1980s, emphasis in instruction shifted from teaching skills to applying concepts. ... In addition to teaching students how to find information, librarians now [recognized] the importance of teaching critical thinking skills to enable students to evaluate and select the best information for their needs” (Tiefel 1995, 322-323).

In the late 1980s a sample of ARL members were surveyed to ascertain trends in library instruction during that decade. Over ninety percent of the forty-two respondents reported that their library provided orientation sessions for new students and course-related instruction at the request of an instructor. Most respondents stated that their instructional programs had expanded during the 1980s, but their responses suggested a shift from long term programs, such as credit courses, to workshops and self-paced computer-aided instruction. Overall the results showed that instruction had become a core mission of academic libraries by the 1980s (Chadley and Gavryck 1989).

Marybeth Charters conducted a survey on the extent of classroom instruction in academic libraries in 1996. While she received only twenty-one usable responses, her findings provided insight into the state of undergraduate library instruction in the 1990s. Charters separated her responses into four-year, masters, and doctoral institutions for analysis. She found that classroom instruction at four-year schools involved a much larger proportion of the student body than it did at graduate institutions, although librarians averaged similar annual numbers of instruction sessions at each type of

institution. Based on these results, she suggested that library instruction was not reaching a substantial proportion of the undergraduates at many large universities (Charters 1998).

Several studies have assessed undergraduate library skills to determine the impact of instructional programs. In the 1990s librarians at Kent State University studied library skills among their freshmen. Although the majority of participants had received library instruction during college, their research skills varied widely. The librarians found that students who had received more assignments entailing library research had stronger library skills. They suggested some important implications of these results: Librarians should “make their library instruction appropriate to the assignment at hand. ... The prescriptive lecture is not necessarily the most effective means for teaching these lessons. Students are more likely to develop critical judgment through active learning strategies” (Kunkel, Weaver, and Cook 1996, 432).

Librarians have long believed that course-based instruction is the most effective method for teaching library skills to college and university students (Tiefel 1995, 324). In addition, many professionals agree that instruction sessions related to an assignment, and therefore addressing an immediate research need, have the greatest impact on students. The main challenge facing librarians who want to implement course-based instruction is often obtaining the cooperation of instructors. The “faculty culture” has traditionally resisted library instruction. In his 1995 article, Evan Farber asserted that “the resistance has ameliorated over the years, [but] it still seems to be a major obstacle to enhancing the educational role of librarians” (174).

Reference and User Education in Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections

Many archives and manuscripts repositories are units of libraries and they perform similar functions and share a common mission with libraries. These types of institutions “both select, preserve, organize, and make available information in documentary form. Both libraries and archives are institutions whose mission is to preserve our collective memory, to make accumulated knowledge available for present and future use” (Pugh 1992, 4).

Yet these two environments also have significant differences. Library collections consist primarily of published sources that are classified by subject in a standard format that provides guidance to their relative physical location. On the other hand, archives and manuscripts repositories collect original documents, arrange them according to the principles of provenance and original order, and describe them in variety of finding aids (Pugh 1982). Since these materials are housed in closed stacks to minimize environmental and security threats, users cannot browse the collections, and therefore the patrons of archival repositories are much more dependent on staff than library users (Tissing 1984, 173-174).

The nature of the archival environment also produces some notable differences in the reference process. While librarians guide users to the appropriate bibliographic tools, archivists are expected to have extensive knowledge of the subject content and organization of their collections (Cross 1997, 6-7). “Reference encounters in libraries are usually short and voluntary, each devoted to a single question. In contrast, reference transactions in archives are more likely to be substantive, obligatory, and continuing” (Pugh 1992, 45-46).

The reference staff in archives and manuscripts repositories coordinate physical access to their collections by working with users to identify relevant materials and then retrieving them from the stacks. They also administer intellectual and legal access by enforcing donor-imposed restrictions, privacy rights, and copyright law. In addition, reference archivists must consider preservation and security issues, balancing “the need to protect the integrity of the holdings” with their mission to promote access and use (Cross 1997, 10).

While the reference function in libraries has been studied for many decades, archival reference did not begin to receive substantial attention in the scholarly literature until the last quarter of the twentieth century. The Society of American Archivists published manuals on reference in 1977 and 1992, demonstrating the important role of reference and user education in archival work (Whalen 1985, 3).¹ But in 1992 Richard Cox asserted that there was still “a dearth of systematic and careful research about the reference process and the use of archival records” (387).

Some early scholarly research on reference and user education in archives and manuscripts repositories focused on the one-on-one interaction of the reference or orientation interview. In the 1980s Robert W. Tissing Jr. studied these interviews at twelve archival institutions across the United States. He found that the interviewers generally covered the same topics but followed no formal guide. His article concludes with a checklist of issues that should be addressed in every orientation interview (Tissing 1984).

¹ See Sue E. Holbert, *Archives and Manuscripts: Reference and Access*, Basic Manual Series (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1977) and Mary Jo Pugh, *Providing Reference Services for Archives and Manuscripts*, Archival Fundamentals Series (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1992).

In her 2002 master's paper, Jill Katte used Tissing's checklist as the framework for evaluating web-based user instruction in a sample of thirty archives and manuscripts departments at large research institutions. She found that the majority of her sample websites contained research guides and other information facilitating access to the collections, but none of the sites provided an online tutorial. Based on the results of her study, Katte presented a model for web-based archival user education with four types of information: an introduction to archival materials, information about intellectual access to the collections, information about physical access to the collections, and policies pertaining to end use of materials from the collections (Katte 2002).

Although Katte included online tutorials in her research, most of her paper focused on more passive forms of web-based user education. However, user education needs to go beyond orientation and written guidelines. Certainly not all archival instruction is provided individually through a reference interview or passively through the Internet. Archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments in colleges and universities should supplement their web-based instruction with interactive forms that more effectively attract and engage undergraduates and educate them about the unique issues surrounding the use of original materials.

Undergraduate Instruction in Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections

In a 1984 article Ken Osborne suggested that archivists have not traditionally perceived classroom instruction as part of their mission. "The main educational role of the archives was seen as fostering and supporting scholarly research" (16). In the past decade, however, several professionals have published articles about their experiences

with undergraduate classroom instruction in archives and special collections at small colleges and universities. Their articles demonstrate multiple methods for integrating archives, manuscripts, and special collections in the undergraduate curriculum. These materials may be incorporated in general library instruction sessions, faculty sometimes request instruction sessions on a specific topic related to the collections, and more rarely department staff teach an entire course based on their collections.

Undergraduate instruction in archives, manuscripts, and special collections has a strong history at a few institutions. Curators of rare books at Smith College have done presentations for undergraduate classes since the late 1940s. Ruth Mortimer described the philosophy of this instruction program in an article published in 1983: “The emphasis is on matching the single book to the single student; the class presentation is a necessary economy but not a substitute for that relationship. ... Undergraduates are surprised to learn that what they need in the Rare Book Room is not a note from their professor but intelligent curiosity. They are free to look at what interests them” (108-110).

Occasionally archival collections are the basis for a semester-long college course. In an article published in 1998, Laurie McFadden, the University Archivist at Alfred University in New York, discussed an honors seminar that she taught centered around the university archives and focusing on student life at the university in the 1890s. She argued that such a course has benefits for students, the archives, and the university: it teaches students how to use and interpret primary sources, it helps the archives research its collections, and it increases students’ appreciation of and dedication to their institution.

In the fall of 1995 Susan Allen conducted a survey on special collections resources, staffing, and instructional programs at seventy-five of the nation's best liberal arts colleges. She found that most libraries had special collections, but many had only one or fewer full-time professionals to manage their special collections. Despite limited staffing, over eighty percent of her respondents provided instruction through tours, exhibitions, and class visits, and two-thirds indicated that seniors used special collections in researching their theses. Her survey did not examine the extent, quality, or impact of these instructional programs (Allen 1999).

In her 1999 article Allen also described several examples of in-depth projects, such as a student-curated exhibit, that she or another professional had undertaken to bring together undergraduates and special collections. However, she acknowledged that such projects require small classes. "That is why small liberal arts colleges, with their smaller class sizes, are perfectly placed to link students with special collections" (117). Since major research institutions usually have larger classes, one wonders how they connect undergraduates with their archives, manuscripts, and special collections.

Many professionals would agree with Allen's assertion that special collections librarians must be proactive in promoting their services for undergraduate instruction. They should maintain regular communication with other instruction librarians on campus so that they are aware of the classes receiving general library instruction and can encourage them to incorporate special collections when the subject of the course is related to its holdings. In addition, special collections librarians need to build close partnerships with faculty members (Allen 1999).

In a more recent article Marcus Robyns discussed his experiences using the “archives as a laboratory” in historical research methods instruction. Echoing the literature on library instruction, Robyns advocated teaching critical thinking skills through archival materials. “Because primary sources are themselves subjective in nature, their use in the research process requires the application of critical thinking skills. Here, the archivist can make a real difference in education by guiding students through the process of critical thinking, making the archives not only a repository of the past but a challenging center of inquiry” (Robyns 2001, 365).

The literature examined here suggests that instruction promoting critical thinking skills will become a central function of archival repositories in academic libraries in the future. As they incorporate more interactive instruction for undergraduates into their programs, archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments will increasingly serve as laboratories for students in many disciplines. However, before using original materials students need to have an understanding of the unique nature of primary sources and the policies and procedures of their archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments. Interactive classroom instruction sessions may be the most efficient and effective way to place these issues in front of undergraduates.

Methodology

This study was conducted through a mail survey. The population was defined as all United States universities with membership in the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and with an archives, manuscripts, or special collections department in their library system (see Appendix A). If the library had multiple departments of this type, the primary or largest unit was selected. The surveys were sent to the department's head of public services or, in the absence of an equivalent position, the head of the department. All ninety-nine institutions in the population received the survey.

The methodology employed to develop and administer this survey was derived from *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* by Don A. Dillman. This book provides guidance for developing survey questions that are clear and unbiased, hold the interest of recipients, and produce accurate and meaningful data. The procedures that Dillman recommends for administering surveys are designed to foster the trust of respondents, increase the response rate, and reduce survey error (Dillman 2000, 4).

Survey Development

The survey questions were developed from the relevant literature and conversations with professionals involved in instruction. A discussion with Laura Clark Brown, the Head of Public Services in the Manuscripts Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, enhanced my understanding of the nature and challenges

of teaching undergraduates about archives and manuscripts. Her input was instrumental in the construction and refinement of the questions.

The process of question development also incorporated recommendations from Earl Babbie (2004) and Don Dillman (2000). Whenever possible, questions were written with concrete response choices to make completion quicker and easier for participants and to allow classification and quantitative analysis of the results. A scale with five levels of frequency, ranging from always to never, was employed to ascertain the format and content of undergraduate instruction sessions. Many questions incorporated space for participants to record other responses or comments, and respondents were also asked to discuss their experiences and opinions in several open-ended questions.

The literature on constructing surveys recommends that they begin with the most interesting questions and that the initial questions especially should be concrete and have a ready answer. To simplify the instructions, questions with the same response choices should be grouped together, and demographic information should be gathered at the end of a survey (Babbie 2004, 254; Dillman 2000, 87-88). These principles were applied to determine an appropriate and effective order for the questions in this survey.

Dillman argues that paper surveys should be produced in booklets, because people are familiar with this format and know how to use it. The cover should be simple, unique, and memorable. Following these recommendations, the survey was produced as a booklet made of legal size paper that was folded and stapled on the spine (Dillman 2000, 82-83, 137). The booklet consisted of a front and back cover and eight pages of questions, all printed on three sheets of white legal size paper. In addition to the title of the study and name of its sponsoring institution, the front cover presented an image from

a Durham, North Carolina yearbook; it was reproduced with the permission of the Southern Historical Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Since the survey would be sent to the entire population of the study, it could not be pretested on a representative sample of professional personnel. Instead, pretesting was conducted with other experienced and knowledgeable library staff at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: two professionals in the library instruction department and three non-professionals in the Manuscripts Department. Additional input was received from professors in the School of Information and Library Science.

Survey Administration

According to Dillman, multiple contacts with survey recipients are the key to producing a high response rate. He recommends five contacts, with at least the first four by mail: a prenotice letter, the questionnaire, a thank you postcard, a replacement questionnaire, and a final contact. Each contact should have “a different look and feel” and build on earlier arguments to convince recipients of the importance of their individual response (Dillman 2000, 149-151).

Due to constraints in time and money, this study was administered with one paper contact in the mailing of the questionnaire and additional contacts through email messages (see Appendix B). In retrospect, I believe that this strategy was more effective than only mail contacts because it opened an easy additional channel of communication with survey recipients, encouraging them to ask questions, make comments, and later in the process choose the survey format with which they were most comfortable.

Following Dillman's recommendation, all correspondence was personalized (Dillman 2000, 152). Since a high response was attained soon after the fourth contact, a fifth attempt to get in touch with recipients was deemed unnecessary. Table 1 summarizes the dates and nature of contacts with the survey recipients.

Table 1: Contacts with the Survey Recipients

1st -- Prenotice Email	February 13, 2004
2nd -- Cover letter and Survey Mailed	February 14, 2004
3rd -- Follow-up Email	March 11, 2004
4th -- Final Contact by Email	April 7, 2004

A prenotice email was sent on February 13, 2004. I received approximately a dozen responses to this email, most simply stating a willingness to participate in the study. Some of these messages identified another staff member to whom the survey would be directed, and in hindsight it might have been wise to have a few more days between the prenotice and the mailing to incorporate these changes.

The cover letter, questionnaire, and a stamped addressed return envelope were mailed to ninety-nine individuals on February 14 (see Appendix C). The cover letter requested that the survey be returned by March 5, giving the recipient approximately three weeks to respond. It presented the opportunity for respondents to receive the results of the study as an incentive for their participation. An email expressing thanks was sent to all respondents upon the receipt of their completed surveys.

Survey recipients who did not respond to the initial mailing were sent a follow-up email on March 11 urging their participation and offering another copy of the survey, either in print or electronic form, at their request. The fourth and final contact, sent on April 7, was an email message with a copy of the survey attached to it. These efforts led to the return of eighty-six surveys.

Data Analysis

Eighty-five responses provide usable data, producing a usable return rate of 85.86%. The questions with predetermined or classifiable response sets were coded and entered along with the numerical data into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for compilation and analysis. Cross-tabulation and the comparison of means were employed to identify relationships between variables.

Findings

Profile of the Respondents

The majority of the institutions represented by respondents, sixty-one or 71.76%, are publicly funded. In 2001-2002 they had undergraduate enrollments between one and forty thousand, with an average of 18,275 undergraduate students. Not surprisingly, the public institutions are much larger, averaging over twenty thousand undergraduates, while most of the private institutions have fewer than ten thousand undergraduates.

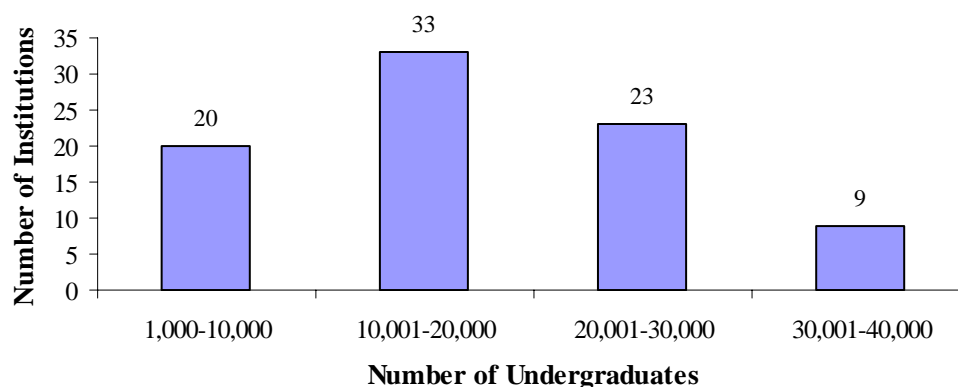
Table 2 summarizes this information.

Table 2: Profile of the Institutions

<i>Funding Source</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Public	61	71.76%
Private	24	28.24%
<i>Undergraduate Enrollment*</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mean</i>
All institutions	~18,000	~18,275
Public institutions	~20,500	~22,325
Private institutions	~6,300	~8,000

*The data for each institution was collected from Peterson's *Four Year Colleges* (2003).

Figure 1 shows the distribution of undergraduate enrollments among these eighty-five institutions.

Figure 1: Undergraduate Enrollment

The majority of survey respondents, sixty-two or 72.94%, represent a department with “Special Collections” in its title, and twenty of these departments also include “Archives” in their name. A few respondents represent a public services department or some other unit within special collections. The departments not entitled “Special Collections” generally have names showing some combination of rare books, archives, manuscripts, and special collections.

These titles show that most departments collect archives, manuscripts, and rare books, and their collections also usually include photographs, maps, audio, and video. The survey requested estimates of the size of department collections, either as an item count or in linear feet. Many respondents provided separate numbers for different formats, and twenty-five people left the question blank. It is a little surprising that some respondents do not have easy access to statistics about their total holdings, especially since they submit statistics to ARL each year.

The aggregated estimates of collection size from respondents and total holdings of archives and manuscripts reported by ARL are shown in Table 3. In all of the categories

shown below the collections at private institutions are on average substantially larger than those of public universities.

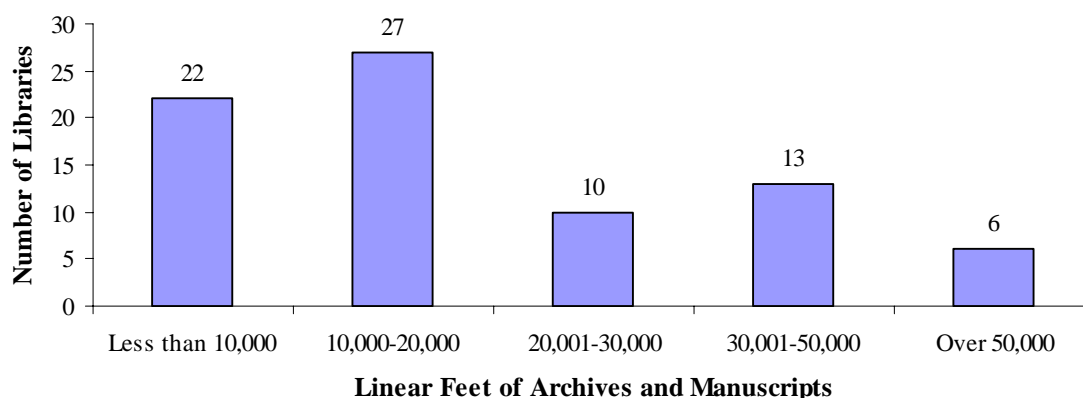
Table 3: Size of the Collections

<i>Collection Measure</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Estimated number of volumes of books and printed materials	49	150,000	~192,000
Estimated number of photographs	6	650,000	579,000
Estimated linear feet of archives and manuscripts	48	12,250	~16,000
Total linear feet of archives and manuscripts held by the libraries, as reported by ARL*	81	~17,000	~26,000

*The data for each library was collected from *ARL Statistics 2002-03* (2004).

Even the ARL numbers are an approximation for many libraries and this may explain why the number of linear feet in the ARL report is sometimes very different from that provided by a respondent. Some respondents may have included books in their estimate of linear feet, while the ARL numbers represent only archives and manuscripts. It should also be noted that some libraries hold archives and manuscripts in units other than the surveyed department. Figure 2 shows the distribution of the linear feet statistics reported by ARL.

Figure 2: Libraries' Total Holdings of Archives and Manuscripts



The responding departments administer collections encompassing a broad range of subjects. The survey asked participants to list the major subject strengths of their

collections, and most people listed four or more very specific topics. While many departments have eclectic collection strengths, the majority have strong literary collections and many materials relating to state, local, or regional history. The most common collection strengths are shown in Table 4, in which each department is represented by up to four subject areas.

Table 4: Subject Strengths of the Collections

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
American History	14	17.07%
British and American Literature	49	59.76%
Graphic or Performing Arts	19	23.17%
History of Science and Technology	17	20.73%
Political History	6	7.32%
Printing, Publishing, or Book Arts	18	21.95%
State, Local, or Regional History	51	62.20%
State, Local, or Regional Literature	9	10.98%

The survey examined the size and nature of department staffing by asking respondents to estimate the number of full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees in various categories. The responses show that departments at private colleges and universities average one more professional FTE but about the same number of paraprofessional FTEs compared with departments in public institutions. Instead of providing numbers, a few participants simply stated that their graduate and undergraduate staffs vary. It is suspected that some respondents reported total employees rather than FTE staff, particularly in the graduate and undergraduate categories. Under “other,” respondents listed secretaries, project staff, interns, and volunteers. This data is summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Department Staffing

<i>Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) Employees</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Professionals	84	0.75	25	5.06
Paraprofessionals	84	0	50	4.29
Graduate assistants	81	0	10	1.39
Undergraduate students	81	0	30	4.65
Other	83	0	6	0.37

Departments that Do Not Offer Instruction

Three of the eighty-five usable responses show that these departments do not provide instruction for undergraduates. Two of these respondents suggested that all undergraduate classroom instruction is provided by the main library system at their institutions, implying that the department does provide individual user instruction to undergraduates who visit to use the collections. Similarly, the third person stated that her department does not have a formal instruction program for undergraduates, but it does “respond to requests by faculty [and provide] individual instruction when students need to use collections.”

Departments that Do Offer Instruction

Eighty-two or 96.47% of the respondents reported that their department offers classroom instruction for undergraduates, and it is these surveys that are the focus of subsequent discussion and analysis. They indicate that the extent of undergraduate instruction varies from only a few sessions a semester or quarter to extensive, carefully planned instructional programs. The responses show that undergraduate instruction sessions are often related to a specific course assignment, they are usually conducted for small classes, and they average an hour in length. Table 6 summarizes this data.

Table 6: Characteristics of Undergraduate Instruction Sessions

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Session is related to an assignment	19.51% (N=16)	54.88% (N=45)	20.73% (N=17)	2.44% (N=2)	1.22% (N=1)
<i>Duration</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	
Length of the session	82	35 minutes	90 minutes	61 minutes	
<i>Average Number of Students</i>		<i>Number</i>		<i>Percent*</i>	
Less than 20 students		42		51.22%	
20-30 students		40		48.78%	

*Unless otherwise noted, from this point forward percentages represent the proportion of the eighty-two departments that offer instruction for undergraduates.

Instructors and Facilities

The survey asked participants to list the job titles of those who conduct their undergraduate classroom instruction sessions, and these responses are summarized in Table 7. Most departments have several members involved in instruction, often including the department head, public services professionals, and curators of the collections most relevant to the sessions. A few respondents reported that campus faculty teach sessions using department materials, while the results show that nonprofessional department staff are only rarely involved in instruction.

Table 7: Staff Who Conduct Undergraduate Instruction Sessions

<i>Number of Department Staff Involved</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
One	10	12.20%
Two	19	23.17%
Three or more	49	59.76%
<i>Job Titles of Staff</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Department Head	29	35.37%
Public Services Librarian or Archivist	26	31.71%
Librarian(s)	31	37.80%
Curator(s)	36	43.90%
Archivist(s)	31	37.80%
Nonprofessional(s)	6	7.32%

One-half of the respondents reported that their department has its own classroom for instruction. The remaining departments conduct undergraduate instruction in a variety of locations: their reading room, a department meeting room, or a library classroom. Several people reported using some combination of these locations, with smaller classes often held in the reading room and large classes in a library classroom. In addition, some instruction sessions may be held in the classroom in which the course regularly meets. These responses are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Facilities Used for Undergraduate Instruction Sessions

<i>Facility</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Department classroom	41	50.00%
Reading room	21	25.61%
Department meeting room	1	1.22%
Library classroom	9	10.98%
Reading room or department meeting room	1	1.22%
Reading room or library classroom(s)	3	3.66%
Reading room, department meeting room, or library classroom	3	3.66%
Other	1	1.22%

The comments from respondents indicate that they have to be flexible about the location of instruction sessions and the situation is often not ideal, particularly when sessions are held in the reading room. One participant stated that when instruction is conducted in the reading room patrons are moved to the staff workspace. A few respondents said that they or their colleagues dislike using a library classroom, because “it necessitates having to move materials out of the department, thereby limiting the number. It also prohibits close inspection of material by students (vs. seminar style in Reading Room).”

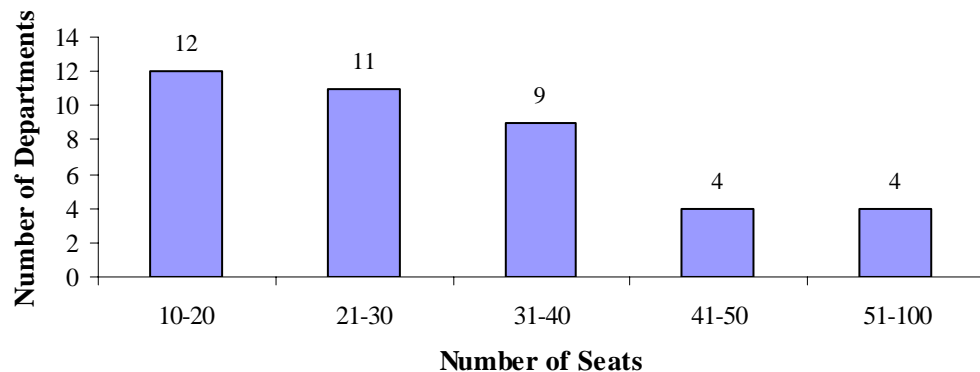
Forty-one respondents reported that their department has its own classroom. A larger percentage of departments in private institutions have their own classroom, with

58.33% indicating they have a department classroom as opposed to 45.76% of public institutions. Most classrooms are fairly small, with ten to thirty seats, while the average size is thirty-four seats. Classrooms in public institutions average eight more seats than those in private institutions because several departments in public universities have large facilities. This data is summarized in Table 9, and Figure 3 shows the distribution of classroom sizes.

Table 9: Number of Seats in the Department Classrooms

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mean</i>
All institutions	30	~34 (N=40)
Public institutions	30	~36 (N=27)
Private institutions	25	~28 (N=13)

Figure 3: Size of the Department Classrooms



The majority of respondents who said that their department has a classroom reported that it is wired for Internet access and is adequate for their needs. Not surprisingly, those who indicated that their classroom is inadequate say they would like more space and network access. Two respondents stated that their department could use a second classroom, while three people reported that they have more than one classroom. These responses are summarized in Table 10.

Table 10: Characteristics of the Department Classrooms

<i>Characteristic</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent*</i>
Classroom is wired for Internet access	29	70.73%
Classroom space is adequate for needs	25	60.98%
Classroom space is not adequate	16	39.02%
Because it's too small	10	24.39%
Because it has no network access	7	17.07%
Because its design is poor and/or outdated	2	4.88%

*Percentages are calculated from the forty-one departments that have their own classroom.

Academic Disciplines

The survey inquired about the academic departments for which the respondents' departments had provided classroom instruction for undergraduates during the previous semester or quarter. A list of choices was presented, including an option to select "other" and fill in additional disciplines. Table 11 summarizes the results. The starred subjects were not included in the list of choices but were written in multiple times. The broad categories entitled "Languages" and "Sciences" were added to aggregate a variety of sub-disciplines of these fields.

Table 11: Academic Disciplines Involved in Instruction

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
African-American Studies	21	25.61%	Interdisciplinary Freshman Course*	4	4.88%
American Studies	30	36.59%	Journalism	22	26.83%
Anthropology	23	28.05%	Languages*	12	14.63%
Architecture*	4	4.88%	Linguistics	7	8.54%
Art or Art History	57	69.51%	Music*	8	9.76%
Classics	30	36.59%	Political Science	13	15.85%
Communications	16	19.51%	Religion*	2	2.44%
Education	12	14.63%	Sciences*	6	7.32%
Engineering*	3	3.66%	Sociology	8	9.76%
English	68	82.93%	Theater*	4	4.88%
Geography	7	8.54%	Women's Studies	24	29.27%
History	72	87.80%	Other	26	31.71%

*Disciplines incorporated from those written in the "other" category.

The academic disciplines involved in instruction are usually related to subject strengths of department collections. It is interesting that about a quarter of the departments have provided instruction for courses in the relatively young fields of African-American Studies, American Studies, and Women's Studies. Yet the traditional disciplines remain the most common recipients of instruction, as the vast majority of the departments conduct instruction for history and English classes.

In addition, many respondents reported that the largest numbers of their undergraduate instruction sessions are for courses in history and English. Table 12 shows the academic disciplines that received the most instruction sessions during the previous semester or quarter. The numbers show how many times each discipline was named as receiving the most instruction sessions, whether the respondent listed one, two, or three subjects. Eleven respondents listed two subjects, and four named three subjects.

Table 12: Academic Disciplines with the Most Instruction Sessions

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Number</i>
African-American Studies	2
American Studies	2
Architecture	1
Art or Art History	13
English	26
History	35
Journalism	3
Languages	1
Linguistics	1
Religion	1
Women's Studies	2
Other	8

Format and Content of Instruction Sessions

The results shown in Table 13 indicate that undergraduate instruction sessions often utilize traditional teaching techniques, including lecture, handouts, and student questions. However, the sessions may be more informal and interactive than these elements suggest. Several responses indicate that sessions often include an active learning component. One participant described the format of instruction sessions as “less formal than lecture, [with an introduction], show ‘n’ tell, and discussion.”

Table 13: Activities Included in Instruction Sessions

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Tour of the Reading Room	28.05% (N=23)	25.61% (N=21)	28.05% (N=23)	15.85% (N=13)	2.44% (N=2)
Tour of technical services and/or the stacks	3.66% (N=3)	3.66% (N=3)	8.55% (N=7)	36.59% (N=30)	47.56% (N=39)
Lecture	35.37% (N=29)	46.34% (N=38)	9.76% (N=8)	7.32% (N=6)	1.22% (N=1)
Introduction to the department's website	24.39% (N=20)	30.49% (N=25)	30.49% (N=25)	12.20% (N=10)	2.44% (N=2)
PowerPoint or slide presentation	2.44% (N=2)	4.88% (N=4)	17.07% (N=14)	26.83% (N=22)	48.78% (N=40)
Provision of handouts	26.83% (N=22)	34.14% (N=28)	32.93% (N=27)	4.88% (N=4)	1.22% (N=1)
Time for student questions	96.34% (N=79)	3.66% (N=3)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)

While one respondent reported doing tours of technical services and the stacks “sometimes for effect,” most instruction sessions do not include such tours. Several respondents stated that they do not give a tour of the reading room, but they point it out or it is the site of instruction sessions. A few others noted that the reading room is “usually occupied,” suggesting that a tour would be impractical or disruptive. Departments without their own classroom are more likely to show students the reading room during instruction sessions.

Because the department website is often a gateway to its collections, it is interesting that only about half the respondents reported that the website is always or usually introduced during instruction sessions. Many respondents do not have Internet access or a projection capability at the site of their sessions, but the departments with a classroom and network access are not much more likely to introduce their website. As with the reading room, the department homepage may often be noted but not presented during undergraduate instruction sessions.

This study was based on the premise that instruction sessions are often the first time undergraduates encounter the archives, manuscripts, or special collections department at their college or university. Therefore, the survey assumed that most instruction sessions provide a general introduction to the department and its holdings in addition to addressing the topic(s) requested by the professor. Two respondents indicated that this assumption is not always appropriate, depending on the focus of the class.

As Table 14 demonstrates, however, the majority of responses reveal that most undergraduate instruction sessions introduce students to the department, its rules and restrictions, and its procedures for requesting and handling original materials. Students are less frequently shown how to find appropriate sources with print and electronic finding aids, probably because some professors have already identified relevant materials. Not surprisingly, preservation and digitization are only sometimes addressed in these sessions; these archival issues are probably too complex to cover in the limited time of an introductory instruction session.

Table 14: Issues Covered in Instruction Sessions

<i>Issue</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
How to Use Print Finding Aids	35.37% (N=29)	29.27% (N=24)	28.05% (N=23)	3.66% (N=3)	2.44% (N=2)
How to Use Electronic Finding Aids	32.93% (N=27)	41.46% (N=34)	20.73% (N=17)	1.22% (N=1)	1.22% (N=1)
Department Rules and Restrictions	62.20% (N=51)	29.27% (N=24)	4.88% (N=4)	2.44% (N=2)	0% (N=0)
How to Request Materials	59.76% (N=49)	30.49% (N=25)	7.32% (N=6)	0% (N=0)	1.22% (N=1)
How to Handle Primary Sources	50.00% (N=41)	30.49% (N=25)	15.85% (N=13)	2.44% (N=2)	0% (N=0)
Preservation and Conservation	12.20% (N=10)	24.39% (N=20)	42.68% (N=35)	17.07% (N=14)	2.44% (N=2)
Digitization	8.54% (N=7)	12.20% (N=10)	50.00% (N=41)	24.39% (N=20)	3.66% (N=3)

An instruction session may also be the first time that many undergraduates encounter original documents. Table 15 shows that definitions and examples of both primary and secondary sources are usually included in undergraduate instruction sessions. Original materials are nearly always on display, and in some departments students “frequently have materials for ‘hands on’ time too.” In addition, sessions usually address how to interpret primary sources.

Table 15: Concepts Addressed in Instruction Sessions

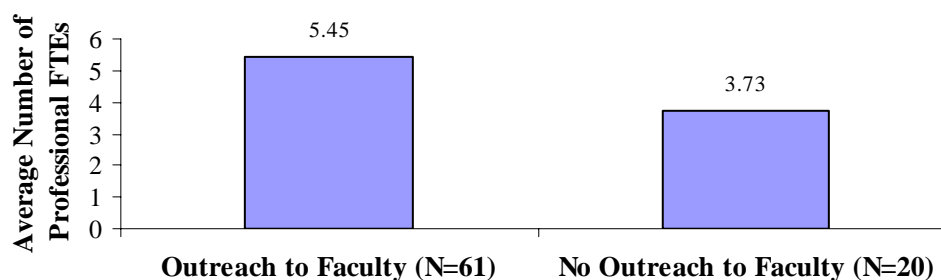
<i>Concept</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Definition of Primary Sources	39.02% (N=32)	41.46% (N=34)	14.63% (N=12)	2.44% (N=2)	0% (N=0)
How to Interpret Primary Sources	30.49% (N=25)	32.93% (N=27)	26.83% (N=22)	6.10% (N=5)	2.44% (N=2)
Examples of Primary Sources	68.29% (N=56)	23.17% (N=19)	7.32% (N=6)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)
Definition of Secondary Sources	35.37% (N=29)	31.71% (N=26)	23.17% (N=19)	7.32% (N=6)	1.23% (N=1)
Examples of Secondary Sources	26.83% (N=22)	24.39% (N=20)	28.05% (N=23)	15.85% (N=13)	3.66% (N=3)

Relationships with Faculty

Sixty-one or 74.39% of the respondents reported that they contact faculty to inform them about their instructional services. Some departments appear to have an extensive outreach program, using emails, phone calls, flyers, and visits to faculty meetings to encourage use of their instructional services. Several departments target new faculty with information about their services, and a few examine course offerings and contact faculty whose classes are related to their holdings.

Many departments rely on informal personal contacts and word of mouth to market their services. One respondent stated that there are “not enough staff to do a structured, systematic effort.” This comment may be even more applicable to the departments that do not contact faculty, since they average fewer professional FTEs than those that do conduct outreach. This difference is illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Professional FTEs and Outreach to Faculty



Several people reported that faculty usually contact them and many faculty are repeat users of their services. Two respondents stated that they have tried and ceased formal outreach methods because they produced little or no response from their faculty.

Most respondents were positive about communication with faculty before and during undergraduate instruction sessions. Faculty expectations are usually clear prior to the sessions, and sufficient time is available to cover the necessary material. Faculty and

student response to instruction sessions is usually good, but many faculty members do not provide feedback after the sessions. Table 16 presents these results.

Table 16: Communication about Instruction Sessions

<i>Element</i>	<i>Always</i>	<i>Usually</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>
Faculty expectations are clear prior to the session	9.76% (N=8)	63.41% (N=52)	23.17% (N=19)	3.66% (N=3)	0% (N=0)
Time to cover the material is sufficient	8.54% (N=7)	71.95% (N=59)	13.41% (N=11)	6.10% (N=5)	0% (N=0)
Student response is good	10.98% (N=9)	79.27% (N=65)	9.76% (N=8)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)
Faculty response is good	26.83% (N=22)	71.95% (N=59)	1.22% (N=1)	0% (N=0)	0% (N=0)
Faculty provide feedback afterwards	3.66% (N=3)	24.39% (N=20)	53.66% (N=44)	17.07% (N=14)	0% (N=0)

Some faculty teach undergraduate courses that make significant use of department collections, and the survey asked participants to record the names of these courses. Several respondents provided extensive, detailed lists of these courses, while a few simply stated that there were “too many to list.” These courses are sometimes honors classes or senior seminars, and they usually cover a specific topic closely related to department collection strengths. Table 17 shows the most common subject areas of these courses.

Table 17: Faculty Courses that Make Significant Use of the Collections

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Art or Art History	13	15.85%
Book Arts / History of the Book	5	6.10%
English	30	36.59%
History	48	58.54%
Languages	5	6.10%
Women's Studies	7	8.54%

Other Instructional Services for Undergraduates

University archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments often provide other programs for undergraduates besides course-based instruction sessions. Research guides, online tutorials, workshops, and open houses are the most common instructional services targeting undergraduates outside the classroom. Table 18 shows the frequency that respondents reported offering these services.

Table 18: Other Instructional Services Accessible to Undergraduates

<i>Service</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Research guides	47	57.32%
Interactive online tutorial	4	4.88%
Workshops or open houses	25	30.49%

Research guides have long been produced by archives, manuscripts, and special collections repositories to improve subject access to their collections. These guides are usually designed for researchers, but it is still surprising that only about half of the respondents reported that their department has produced guides accessible to undergraduates. While most respondents said that their department initiated these guides, two people indicated that their main library had first suggested producing them.

Online tutorials are a newer and increasingly popular instructional tool in academic libraries. In archives, manuscripts, and special collections, they usually introduce the department and its holdings and describe how to access and use original materials. Only four respondents reported that their department has produced an online tutorial, but two people indicated that a tutorial is planned and a third stated that the idea is “under active consideration.”

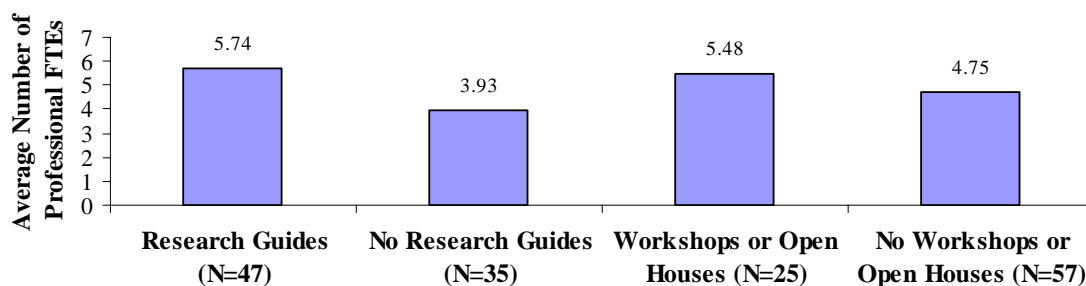
College and university libraries often provide an orientation or open house for new students at the beginning of the academic year, and several respondents reported that

their department participates in these programs, usually with tours of the department.

Two participants also described “theme based open houses designed to showcase different materials from the collection.” Several respondents said that they encourage undergraduates to attend lectures, symposia, and other events that are open to the entire university community.

All of these instructional programs require substantial personnel time. Since departments in private institutions often have more resources and a smaller student body, it is not surprising that a larger proportion reported offering workshops or open houses. Some respondents indicated that their staff are already stretched thin, which may explain why they have not produced research guides, an online tutorial, or open houses accessible to undergraduates. In fact, the departments that do provide these services average more professional FTEs than those that do not. Figure 5 illustrates these differences.

Figure 5: Professional FTEs and Instructional Services Accessible to Undergraduates



*Note: The number of departments that have produced an online tutorial is too few to include in this figure.

Policies and Practices for Undergraduates Using the Collections

Undergraduates are usually inexperienced in primary source research and without instruction may be ignorant of appropriate ways to handle original documents. Their

inexperience may cause them to misuse or even damage irreplaceable materials. Given these risks, this study surmised that archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments would have more stringent rules for undergraduate users than for other researchers.

Only two respondents described restrictions on undergraduate use of original materials. One stated that undergraduates usually need faculty approval before using manuscripts, and the other said that undergraduates are not permitted to use certain manuscript collections. Some departments require all researchers to use alternative formats, such as photocopies, microfilm, or digital images, whenever they are available. The results, shown in Table 19, reveal that most departments apply the same rules and regulations to undergraduates as they do to all other researchers.

Table 19: Undergraduates Who Visit to Conduct Independent Research

<i>Policy or Practice</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Students are allowed to examine the original documents	67	81.71%
Students use the original documents or are directed to alternative formats	6	7.32%
Students are directed to alternative formats or secondary sources	1	1.22%
Students use original documents, alternative formats, or secondary sources	8	9.76%

Many respondents reported that they encourage undergraduates to use their collections. One person asserted that she “would not work in a repository where undergraduate use of original materials was discouraged.” Like other patrons, students are referred to alternative formats if original documents are fragile or to secondary sources for background research. They may also be directed to relevant secondary sources “when it is determined (via reference interview) that these would best suit their needs.” For example, one respondent stated that many undergraduates “ask for first editions when a reading text is all that is necessary.”

Faculty sometimes instruct an entire undergraduate class to visit the archives, manuscripts, or special collections department to examine specific materials. The handling of a single document or set of documents by a large number of people, whether students or other researchers, accelerates physical deterioration and can threaten the integrity of materials. Survey participants were asked how their departments address the preservation issues that arise when a group of students needs to examine the same documents.

Responses to these situations often vary according to the size of the class, the condition and value of the documents, and the availability of alternative formats. Students may be allowed to use the original materials, given photocopies, or directed to digital copies of the documents. Several people indicated that they would apply any of these alternatives, depending on the situation. These responses are summarized in Table 20.

Table 20: Undergraduate Classes Instructed to Examine Specific Documents

<i>Policy or Practice</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Students are allowed to examine the original documents	51	62.20%
Students use physical copies	1	1.22%
Students use original documents or physical copies	10	12.20%
Students use original documents or digital copies	4	4.88%
Students use original documents, physical copies, or digital copies	14	17.07%

Some respondents expressed the conviction that undergraduates should always have the opportunity to see the original documents, even if physical fragility precludes handling and they can only be put on display. One person asserted that “we want students to be familiar with original materials and not be afraid to ask to use them.” Along the same lines, another participant stated that her department “offers digital

reproduction, but no faculty members have requested it. They want their students to interact with the ‘real stuff.’”

The departments that provide digital copies of original materials may make them available on the web, in electronic reserves, or through Blackboard. A few respondents indicated that they produce digital copies so that students can have around-the-clock access to the documents. Although the majority of respondents do not provide digital copies of original documents for undergraduate classes, most departments probably have a digitization capability. As one person stated, “we digitize materials for online exhibits and digital library projects but not normally for specific classes.”

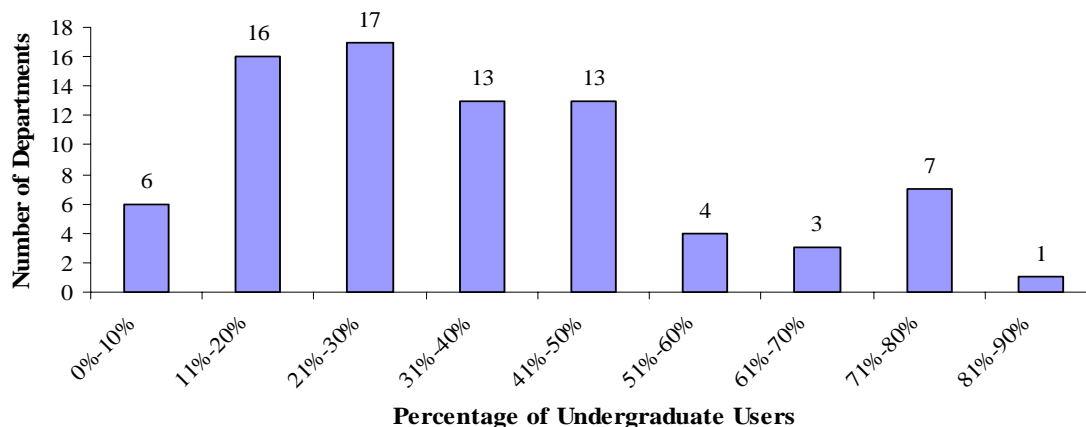
One respondent indicated that her department does substantial planning for undergraduate assignments that use the collections. “We ask teaching faculty to preview with us their course assignments using our materials. We also prefer faculty to review our resources relative to their assignments, and we try to distribute assignments across materials to prevent excessive use of selected items. We have generated at least one digital project because of class use of a narrow range of primary source materials.” Departments in smaller colleges and universities, with a substantial staff, or with a strong working relationship with faculty are probably best positioned to conduct such extensive planning for undergraduate assignments.

Problems and Benefits of Undergraduate Use of the Collections

Undergraduates may comprise a substantial proportion of the users in a university archives, manuscripts, or special collections department. Eighty respondents estimated that an average of 37.19% of their users are undergraduates. One person noted that her

response is for undergraduate visits to the department, but most undergraduate use is through email. As shown in Figure 6, most respondents estimated that between 10% and 50% of their users are undergraduates.

Figure 6: Undergraduates as a Proportion of the Department's Total Users



Survey participants were asked if any problems had developed as a result of undergraduate use of their collections. Many people left the question blank or indicated that they have not had any significant problems, while others discussed issues such as wear on fragile materials and crowding in their reading rooms. Several respondents stated that increasing usage strains their space and personnel, especially when staffing has not grown with use. The most common problems are summarized in Table 21.

Table 21: Problems Arising from Undergraduate Use of the Collections

<i>Problem</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
None*	25	30.49%
Wear and tear on the collections	13	15.85%
Overuse of some specific materials	4	4.88%
Collections get out of order	3	3.66%
Occasional crowding or disruption of the Reading Room	9	10.98%
Increased demands on limited staff time	10	12.20%
Increased, sometimes excessive, photocopying requests	6	7.32%

*These responses explicitly stated that there were no problems to report. The number does not include the many cases in which the question was left blank.

The tendency of undergraduates to work on assignments at the last minute and the departments' limited hours occasionally cause frustration and crowding in their reading rooms. Undergraduates sometimes have expectations that cannot be easily accommodated. For example, they may request large numbers of photocopies or scans of original documents. One respondent stated that undergraduates "tend to be more likely to expect 'quick' answers and aren't as well-prepared for the challenges and time it takes to use our sources."

The respondents were more verbose about the advantages of increasing undergraduate use of their collections. Many people described benefits to their students, staff, departments, and institutions. Some emphasized the joy of introducing students to their resources and showing them "how much fun the materials are." A few participants were less enthusiastic, including one respondent who stated that undergraduate use only produces higher use statistics. These responses are summarized in Table 22.

Table 22: Benefits of Increasing Undergraduate Use of the Collections

<i>Benefit</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Higher use statistics	7	8.54%
Higher campus and community profile	30	36.59%
Fulfills the department, library, and/or university mission	15	18.29%
Fulfills the repository mission to support teaching and research	14	17.07%
Fulfills the repository mission to increase the use of its materials	12	14.63%
Teaches students about primary sources and prepares them for future research with original materials	14	17.07%
Working with undergraduates gives joy and satisfaction to department staff	9	10.98%
It is an investment in the future because it fosters future researchers, advocates, or even donors	16	19.51%

Undergraduate use of the collections supports the educational mission of universities and their libraries. As one respondent stated, it "helps better integrate the department into the larger library and university programs and thus ensures ongoing

support” for the department and its programs. In addition, undergraduate use often fulfills repository missions to support teaching and research and promote the use of their collections.

Many people stated that undergraduate instruction and use raise the visibility of the repository among students, faculty, and administrators. They strengthen the department’s relationships with faculty “who may be able to connect us with others, including donors.” They may also increase faculty knowledge and use of the collections, contributing to increased scholarship based on the collections. A higher profile gives both faculty and administrators a better understanding of the department’s role and is essential to garnering support and resources.

Original materials engage students and promote the development of critical thinking. Echoing the literature, one respondent described her department “as a lab in which students can practice their skills.” Another person asserted that “access to original materials enriches the educational experience for all learners.” Primary source research also prepares students for graduate studies, careers in academia or archival institutions, and lifelong learning.

The benefits to students extend to the department by increasing awareness and support for programs in the present and the future. As one respondent stated, “the library benefits by creating an educated generation of students who understand the importance of collecting and preserving rare books, manuscripts, and other original formats.” Another person commented that “undergraduates who have an understanding of archival materials and who use them may later become graduate students, professors, genealogists, ... and donors. I think it’s an investment in the future of archives.”

Discussion

As shown in the literature review, archives and manuscripts repositories differ in significant ways from libraries. Since each archival repository has unique collections and procedures, librarians outside these departments may be unable to effectively teach students about them. Three participants in this study reported that their main library conducts all classroom instruction for undergraduates at their institution. If these sessions ever incorporate original materials, one wonders how adequately they can address the issues surrounding them and the campus repository that collects them.

This study showed that the majority of archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments at major research institutions provide classroom instruction for their undergraduate students. Several respondents emphasized the importance of holding these sessions in their department so that students can become familiar with the environment and can use original documents during the session. These materials are often bulky or fragile and they cannot be easily or safely transported to a library or academic classroom. Fortunately, half of the responding departments have their own classroom, but even some of these departments would like larger and better-equipped facilities to extend the reach of their instructional programs.

Many respondents indicated that their undergraduate instruction sessions usually address the concept of primary sources and provide an orientation to the repository. A number of participants suggested that sessions incorporate the interpretation of original materials through hands-on activities or course assignments. However, it is often

difficult to fit all of this into one instruction session. Some departments have chosen one approach over the other, while others face the continuing challenge of balancing introductory information with the application of skills. In presenting the results of her user study in 2002, Elizabeth Yakel stated that “balancing the need for higher-level conceptual knowledge and lower-level practical information was debated among the interviewees. This debate also needs to take place among archivists: should we be training users to complete their current project in our repository or should we be educating users to think about primary sources and to identify, search for, and use primary sources more generally” (120)?

Since undergraduates are often unfamiliar with the archival environment, an introduction to repository resources and access tools facilitates and encourages use of the collections. One respondent stated that instruction sessions for undergraduates can “break down the barrier of thinking special collections [are too] delicate for them to use [and] get them excited about the possibility of primary source research.” Another person reported that her department’s “focus with undergraduates is mainly on making them aware of the resources that are available to them Most instruction about using resources takes place one-on-one, in the reading room, after the classroom ‘show-and-tell’ has convinced them there is something here that is worth knowing about.” Several participants stated that they would like to include more orientation sessions in their instructional programs, “to ensure that the students understand how to access and make use of [original materials].”

While it is important to provide introductory information for undergraduates who may return to use resources independently, librarians, curators, and archivists should not

miss the opportunity to teach critical thinking skills through the interpretation of primary sources. Some respondents indicated that their undergraduate instruction sessions focus on specific materials and their interpretation, usually at the request of the professor. These sessions are often related to course assignments, giving students the opportunity to apply and practice the skills addressed during instruction.

Connecting instruction sessions to assignments may be the key to having a lasting impact on undergraduates. As one person asserted, “providing information for undergraduates at the point of need is more effective than giving them information for which they have no immediate use.” Several respondents indicated that they prefer to conduct instruction sessions related to specific assignments. One participant even stated that her department has “worked quite hard [during] the last few years to encourage and develop assignments.” A systematic study of these assignments, including evaluation of their results to determine their effectiveness and impact, would be useful for archivists, librarians, and professors seeking to improve course-based instruction.

The current generation of undergraduates has needs and experiences different from those of its predecessors, and any instructional program should take these factors into account. One respondent asserted that “undergraduates need a more lively presentation due to their experience with media.” It is widely known that students are best engaged through active learning strategies, but more research is needed to determine the specific instructional techniques that most effectively engage students in the archival environment. Several respondents mentioned that their instruction sessions always includes a hands-on or active learning component. Other professionals could benefit from descriptions of the techniques and strategies that their colleagues are using.

Online tutorials are an increasingly popular instructional tool in academic libraries, but only a few archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments have developed these resources. Whether they are an appropriate and effective instructional tool for the archival environment needs to be discussed and studied. An online tutorial can provide an introduction to the nature of primary sources and an orientation to repository policies and procedures, allowing an instruction session to focus on using and interpreting original materials. On the other hand, the use of the tutorial may give students and faculty an excuse not to visit the repository in person, and many professionals feel strongly that visiting the repository and working with original materials are essential components of archival instruction.

While this study did not specifically address evaluation of instruction, it showed that faculty often do not provide feedback after instruction sessions. Archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments should be conducting studies of student and faculty satisfaction with instruction sessions. They should have formal evaluation forms for faculty and students and allow time at the end of sessions for these forms to be completed. If students have an assignment related to the instruction session, a repository could also survey them after its completion to assess the effectiveness of the instruction session. In 2002 Elizabeth Yakel lamented that “there has been no empirical work evaluating the outcomes of different types of archival user education” (119). Research in this area is desperately needed because the results of evaluation are essential to improving instructional practices.

As Susan Allen (1999) asserted, it is crucial that archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments build strong partnerships with instruction librarians in

their main library and with faculty members at their college or university. Through instruction librarians they can learn about opportunities to connect undergraduate courses with their collections. Instruction librarians can also help with outreach activities and the production of other instructional tools such as online tutorials. Departments should build ongoing relationships with faculty to promote their programs, to develop course assignments that make the most effective use of their collections, and to ensure that they meet the educational needs of their students. Some departments are already doing these things, and a few are even looking beyond them. One respondent stated that her department would like “to integrate instruction on use of primary sources into regular [library instruction. They are also] exploring deeper collaboration with faculty such as co-teaching courses with a strong primary source base.”

Cultivating close working relationships with faculty and integrating their collections into the educational curriculum are continuing challenges for archivists and librarians involved in undergraduate instruction. One respondent would like to know about “creative ways in which special collections archivists and librarians have sought to engage faculty at the curriculum development level to invent new ways to insinuate our collections and services into undergraduate instruction.” She would also like to see research on the “explicit ties of primary sources work to trendy information literacy concepts and goals.”

Although some departments have insufficient resources to provide extensive instructional services for undergraduates, this study shows that many university repositories are working hard to achieve this objective.

We are eager to offer more instructional services in our continuing mission to introduce, welcome, and educate people about the challenges and rewards of [primary source] research. These 'raw materials' offer unique opportunities to gain or sharpen critical thinking skills, the aim of undergraduate education. We are limited only by our staffing and the willingness of the faculty to branch out past their lecture notes.

Many other respondents also indicated that their department has a strong commitment to providing instructional services for their undergraduate students.

As one participant pointed out, "until about 15 years ago, it was somewhat unusual for a special collections department to emphasize services for an undergraduate user population. This has slowly changed, and it is much more common now." Today most archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments in major university libraries not only serve individual students conducting research but also provide classroom instruction for their undergraduates. Many departments find their space and staff stretched by increasing undergraduate use, but most respondents feel that the challenges and benefits of serving undergraduates are worthwhile. Undergraduate instruction is a growing priority as these departments increasingly strive to integrate their resources into the undergraduate curriculum and ensure that they make important contributions to the educational mission of their institutions.

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Appendix A: Survey Population

Arizona State University	Texas A&M University
Auburn University	Texas Tech University
Boston College	Tulane University
Boston University	University of Alabama
Brigham Young University	University of Arizona
Brown University	University of California-Berkeley
Case Western Reserve University	University of California-Davis
Colorado State University	University of California-Irvine
Columbia University	University of California-Los Angeles
Cornell University	University of California-Riverside
Dartmouth College	University of California-San Diego
Duke University	University of California-Santa Barbara
Emory University	University of Chicago
Florida State University	University of Cincinnati
Georgetown University	University of Colorado
George Washington University	University of Connecticut
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of Delaware
Harvard University	University of Florida
Howard University	University of Georgia
Indiana University	University of Hawaii
Iowa State University	University of Houston
Johns Hopkins University	University of Iowa
Kent State University	University of Illinois-Chicago
Louisiana State University	University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of Kansas
Michigan State University	University of Kentucky
New York University	University of Louisville
North Carolina State University	University of Maryland
Northwestern University	University of Massachusetts
Ohio State University	University of Miami
Ohio University	University of Michigan
Oklahoma State University	University of Minnesota
Pennsylvania State University	University of Missouri-Columbia
Princeton University	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Purdue University	University of New Mexico
Rice University	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Rutgers University	University of Notre Dame
Southern Illinois University	University of Oklahoma
Stanford University	University of Oregon
State University of New York-Albany	University of Pennsylvania
State University of New York-Buffalo	University of Pittsburgh
State University of New York-Stony Brook	University of Rochester
Syracuse University	University of South Carolina
Temple University	University of Southern California

University of Tennessee-Knoxville
University of Texas-Austin
University of Utah
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Vanderbilt University
Virginia Tech
Washington State University
Washington University-St. Louis
Yale University

Appendix B: Email Contacts

1. Prenotice

Date: February 13, 2004

Subject: UNC-Chapel Hill Study of Instruction in your Field

Dear Sir/Madam,

Next week you will receive in the mail a request to complete a short survey on instruction in your department. I am a graduate student in the School of Information and Library Science at UNC-Chapel Hill, and I am conducting this survey for my master's thesis.

This study is important because very little research has been done on instruction in university archives, manuscripts, and special collections departments. The results will describe current practices in the field and provide ideas for you to add to your department's instruction program.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to seeing your response.

Sincerely,

Elise Allison
MSLS candidate
School of Information and Library Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

2. Thank you

Date: Various

Subject: Thank you!

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for responding to my survey on undergraduate instruction in your department. Your experiences and comments are very valuable, and I truly appreciate your input.

If you indicated a desire to receive the results of this study, you will receive a summary of the findings via email in a few months. Again, thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Elise Allison
MSLS candidate
School of Information and Library Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

3. Follow-up

Date: March 11, 2004

Subject: UNC-Chapel Hill Survey on Instruction

Dear Sir/Madam,

Several weeks ago a short survey on undergraduate instruction in your department was mailed to you. If you have already completed and returned the survey, thank you. If not, please do so as soon as possible.

If you did not receive the survey, or need a new copy for any reason, please reply to this message and let me know if you would prefer a print or electronic version. Your participation would be greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Elise Allison

MSLS candidate

School of Information and Library Science

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

4. Final contact

Date: April 7, 2004

Subject: UNC-Chapel Hill Instruction Study

Dear Sir/Madam,

Several weeks ago I sent you a questionnaire about undergraduate instruction in your department. I have not yet received your response.

The comments of those who have already responded show a variety of approaches to undergraduate instruction in university archives, manuscripts, and special collections. I think that the results will be useful to you and your colleagues as you plan future instruction programs.

I am writing to you once again because your reply is important to producing accurate and representative results in this study. The survey is attached to this message as a Microsoft Word document. Please feel free to return it by email or U.S. mail.

Your responses are completely confidential and will be released only in a summary in which no individual's answers can be identified. The survey is voluntary, but your participation is very important. If for some reason you prefer not to respond, please reply to this message so that I can delete your name from my mailing list.

Please feel free to contact me if you have questions. Your questions or concerns can also be directed to my advisor, Dr. Barbara Moran, at moran@ils.unc.edu. Or you can contact the UNC Academic Affairs Institutional Review Board at aa-irb@unc.edu if you have any concerns about your rights as a participant.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Elise Allison
MSLS candidate
School of Information and Library Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Appendix C: Cover Letter and Survey



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT
CHAPEL HILL

School of Information and Library Science
Phone# (919) 962-8366
Fax# (919) 962-8071

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB# 3360, 100 Manning Hall
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27599-3360

February 9, 2004

Dear Sir/Madam,

Today user instruction is an integral part of the mission of university libraries, but little information is available about such instruction in university archives, manuscripts, and special collections. I am writing to request your participation in a study of undergraduate instruction that will help fill this gap in the literature.

This study examines the unique issues surrounding undergraduate instruction in your field. If you request a copy of the results at the end of the survey, you will receive information about the current practices of your colleagues as well as some concrete and innovative ideas to incorporate in your own instruction programs.

The enclosed survey will take you approximately twenty minutes to complete. Your responses are completely confidential and will be released only in a summary in which no individual's answers can be identified. The survey is voluntary, but your participation is very important. If for some reason you prefer not to respond, please let me know by returning the blank questionnaire in the stamped envelope.

Please fill out the survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope by March 5, 2004. If you have questions, feel free to call me at 919-967-3337 or email me at aealliso@email.unc.edu.

Your questions or concerns can also be directed to my advisor, Dr. Barbara Moran, at moran@ils.unc.edu. You may also contact the UNC Academic Affairs Institutional Review Board at (919) 962-7761 or via email at aa-irb@unc.edu if you have any concerns about your rights as a participant.

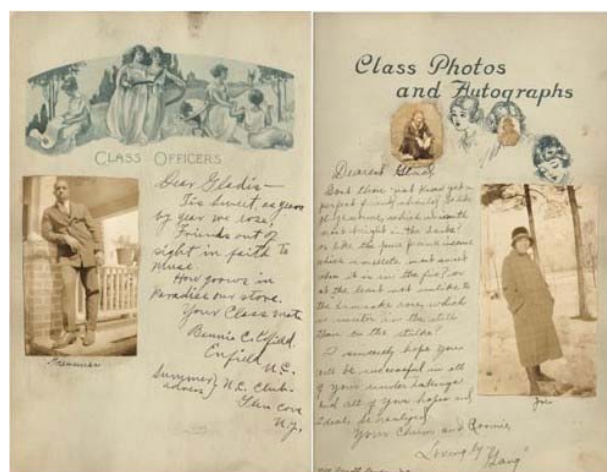
I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Elise Allison

P.S. If you are not in charge of the your department's undergraduate instruction program, please forward this survey to the appropriate person. Many thanks.

A Study of Undergraduate Instruction in University Archives, Manuscripts, and Special Collections



School of Information and Library Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Cover photo:
Durham State Normal School Commencement Book, 1924
George Talmadge Grigsby Papers (#4703)
Southern Historical Collection
Wilson Library
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Please **check** the answer(s) that apply to your department or follow other directions that are provided. Remember that all questions refer to instruction for **undergraduates** and to the archives, manuscripts, and/or special collections department in your library.

1. Does your department offer instruction for undergraduates?

☐ Yes → Go on to #2

☐ No



Why does your department not provide instruction for undergraduates? Check all that apply.

☐ Staff have limited time

☐ Low faculty interest

☐ Low student interest

☐ Concerns about undergraduates handling materials

☐ Minimal support from management

☐ Other/comments: _____

Now please **SKIP** to #22 on page 7.

2. For which academic departments did your department provide classroom instruction for undergraduates last semester or quarter? Check all that apply.

☐ African-American Studies

☐ Geography

☐ American Studies

☐ History

☐ Anthropology

☐ Journalism

☐ Art or Art History

☐ Linguistics

☐ Classics

☐ Political Science

☐ Communications

☐ Sociology

☐ Education

☐ Women's Studies

☐ English

☐ Other: _____

3. For which of the above departments did you conduct the most undergraduate classroom instruction sessions last semester or quarter?

4. Does your department have its own classroom for instruction?

☐ Yes → Go on to #5

☐ Yes ☐ No



Where does your department usually conduct instruction sessions for undergraduates? _____

Now please SKIP to #6.

5. If your answer to #4 was yes,

a. Is the classroom wired for Internet access? ☐ Yes ☐ No

b. Approximately how many seats does the classroom have? _____

c. Is this classroom space adequate for your needs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

d. If the space is NOT adequate, why not? _____

6. Who conducts **undergraduate** classroom instruction sessions for your department? Please provide the job titles of those persons. _____

7. What is the average number of undergraduate students in an instruction session provided by your department? Check one answer.

☐ Less than 20 students

☐ 20-30 students

☐ 31-50 students

☐ Over 50 students, please provide an average number: _____

8. How long is a typical undergraduate classroom instruction session?

9. How often does an **undergraduate** classroom instruction session include each of the following activities?

a. Tour of the Reading Room

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

- b. Tour of the department's technical services and/or stacks
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- c. Lecture
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- d. Introduction to the department website
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- e. PowerPoint or Slide Presentation
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- f. Provision of handouts
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- g. Opportunity for students to ask questions
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never

10. How often does an **undergraduate** classroom instruction session address each of the following issues?

- a. Definition of primary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- b. How to interpret primary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- c. Examples of primary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- d. Definition of secondary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- e. Examples of secondary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- f. How to use the department's print finding aids
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- g. How to use the department's electronic finding aids
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- h. Department rules and restrictions
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- i. Procedures for requesting materials in the department
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never
- j. Appropriate ways of handling primary sources
 ____ Always ____ Usually ____ Sometimes ____ Rarely ____ Never

k. Conservation and Preservation

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

l. Digitization

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

11. How often are undergraduate classroom instruction sessions related to a course assignment?

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

12. Please rate the following about **undergraduate** classroom instruction sessions in your department.

a. Faculty effectively communicate their expectations prior to the session

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

b. Student response and enthusiasm is good

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

c. Faculty interest and enthusiasm is good

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

d. Time to cover the material is sufficient

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

e. Faculty provide the department with feedback after the session

☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

13. How does your department handle a professor's request that an undergraduate class visit to examine a specific document or set of documents? Please explain if you select more than one answer.

☐ Allow the students to examine the original documents

☐ Create physical copies or facsimiles of the original documents for students to examine

☐ Create digital copies of the documents and give students access to these versions through the web

☐ Other/comments: _____

14. What is your department's policy toward **undergraduates** who visit to conduct independent research on a topic of their own choice? Please explain if you select more than one answer.

☐ Students are allowed to request and examine original materials

☐ Students are directed to alternative formats of original materials

☐ Students are encouraged to use appropriate secondary sources instead of primary materials

☐ Other/comments: _____

15. What percentage of your department's users are undergraduates enrolled in your institution? Your best estimate is fine. _____ %

16. What, if any, are the benefits to your department of increasing undergraduate use of your collections? _____

17. What, if any, problems have developed as a result of undergraduate use of your collections? _____

18. Has your department produced any 'how to' guides or research guides accessible to undergraduates?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Who first suggested producing these guides? Check one answer.

☐ Faculty

☐ Students

☐ Your department

☐ Library administration

☐ Other: _____

19. Has your department designed and maintained an interactive online tutorial accessible to undergraduates?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Who first suggested creating the tutorial? Check one answer.

☐ Faculty

☐ Students

☐ Your department

☐ Library administration

☐ Other: _____

If possible, please provide the URL of your tutorial.

20. Has your department held workshops or open houses designed for undergraduates?

☐ Yes ☐ No



Please describe the event(s). _____

21. Do you contact faculty to inform them about the instructional services offered by your department?

____ Yes ____ No



Please describe your outreach methods. _____

22. Have any faculty members taught an **undergraduate** course that makes significant use of your collections?

____ Yes ____ No



Please provide the name(s) of the course(s). _____

23. Ideally, what instructional activities would your department like to provide for undergraduates? Please describe. _____

24. What is the name of your department? _____

25. How large is the collection for which your department is responsible? It is fine if you provide only one of the following measures.

a. Estimated item count: _____

b. Estimated linear feet: _____

26. What are the major subject strengths of your department's collections?

27. Please provide the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in each category employed in your department.

_____ Professionals

_____ Paraprofessionals

_____ Graduate assistants

_____ Undergraduate students

_____ Other: _____

28. Please check here if you would like to receive a copy of the results of this survey. _____

29. This survey has attempted to cover the main elements and issues of undergraduate instruction in archives, manuscripts, and special collections. If you have any additional comments, feel free to discuss them here.

Please return your completed survey in the enclosed stamped envelope to:
Ms. Elise Allison, CB# 3360, 100 Manning Hall, School of Information and
Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill,
NC 27599-3360.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!



CB #3360, 100 Manning Hall
School of Information and Library Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3360