Archiving Your Life’s Work

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What Do You Have?

- Autobiographical Materials
- Writings, Published and Unpublished (Drafts & Final)
- Speeches and Presentations
- Research Files
- Teaching Files
- Professional Organizations and Conference Files
Spring Break
Spring Break
Steps to Follow

- Assess What You Have
- Select the Material You Want to Archive
- Arrange Your Archival Material
- Describe Your Archival Material
- Digitize Analog Material, as needed
- Store and Maintain Your Archive in a Safe Place
Assess What You Have

- Locate all materials in your possession
  - Books, documents, photographs, audio, video, etc.
  - Files on computers, removable media, cloud services
- Use a “Cyclical” approach
  - Broad Assessment of everything first, circle back to look more closely at groups of material
Select Your Material

☐ The scope of your historical collection is defined by YOU

☐ Select the materials that are most important to you

☐ Separate Personal and Work Materials

☐ Toss/Delete unimportant, duplicate materials

☐ Move materials to archival folders, as needed
Arrange Your Material

- Archival concept of “Original Order”
- Group Similar Materials
- Typical Arrangement Approaches
  - Alphabetical by Title, Personal, Project, Organization Name
  - Chronological and Alphabetical within that
Describe Your Material

- Dependent on the amount of material and time you want to commit

- Box and Folder Description: A lot of material, little time
  - Box 1: Published Papers, A-H

- Document-level Description: A lot of time, little or a lot of material
  - Box 1: An Assessment of Solar Flares on Earth’s Atmosphere, 1962, Journal of Science
Approaches for Digital Files

- Same basic process as analog materials
- Assess and Select what you want to keep
- Give individual files descriptive file names
- Create a consistent and understandable directory/folder structure
- Maintain original formats unless at-risk
Digitize Your Material

☐ Is This Required?

☐ Digitize “At Risk” material first

☐ Scanning Your Personal Collections handout

☐ Scan documents individually

☐ Save documents to PDF/A format
Store and Maintain

☐ Store analog files and media in cool, dry location

☐ Digital Files
  ☐ Make at least 2 copies and manage them in different places
  ☐ Check files at least once a year to make sure you can read them
  ☐ Create new media copies every 5 years or when necessary
UW University Archives

- Collects records that document the history of the University
- Faculty governance and committee records
- Faculty member contributions
- Does not collect secondary or published materials
- Work with the General Library System
Resources

- University Archives
  archives.library.wisc.edu
- Library of Congress Personal Archiving
  digitalpreservation.gov
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