

# Thesaurus for Use in College and University Archives

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. Scope

This thesaurus is a set of terms for use by any college or university archives in the United States for describing its holdings.

#### The topical facets are:

- academic affairs
- administration
- classes of persons
- corporate culture
- events
- fields of study
- history
- infrastructure
- sports
- student life

#### Included terms:

- are generic and
- could apply to any college or university.

#### Missing terms:

- were not found among the source terms, but
- are eligible to be added

For example, the terms “freshmen” and “sophomores” are in the thesaurus, but juniors and seniors are not. These are valid terms, but they are not included due to the fact that none of the source thesauri had these terms.

#### Excluded terms:

- are specific to a single college or university, or
- stand alone without reference to a college or university

Essentially, these criteria exclude proper names such as the names of individual persons or families (but not classes of persons), names of buildings or other structures (but not generic

terms relating to buildings), geographic areas, city sections, gardens, parks, or forests (but not typical campus features or facilities), and named corporate bodies, meetings, conferences or events (but not terms designating categories of associations, activities, or types of events).

Examples:

<b>Included/Generic</b>	<b>Excluded/Specific to Hogwarts</b>	<b>Facet</b>
Faculty	Professor Snape	Classes of persons
Students	Harry Potter	Classes of persons
Housing	Gryffindor	Infrastructure
Forests	Dark Forest	Infrastructure
Competitions	Tri-Wizard Tournament	Events
Students' societies	Dumbledore's Army	Corporate bodies

See “

**IV. Resources for Establishing Excluded Terms**” below.

## **II. How to Use the Topical Terms in the Thesaurus**

### **1. Set a policy for your institution**

The terms may be used in stand-alone databases or catalogs; however, when used in union catalogs or shared databases where the institution to which they refer is ambiguous, the terms are intended to be used in combination with a corporate body name for the institution to which they refer.

#### **Stand-alone (single institution)**

If you are using this controlled vocabulary in a context where the institution to which the terms refer may be assumed, correctly, at all times, the terms may be used alone. For example, this would apply to a database of photographs of a single college. Should the data ever be exported to a shared system, then the institutional name becomes ambiguous, and data administrators should take care to add the institutional name to the data upon export.

#### **Shared databases (multi-institution)**

- If used as a faceted thesaurus, terms may be applied as they are, but archivists should take care to include the name of the college or university as an additional heading in any records.

- If your archives holds material related to more than one corporate body (e.g. the women's college and the men's college) it will be necessary to distinguish to which body the term pertains.
- If used in combination with other precoordinated subject heading (such as Library of Congress Subject Headings [LCSH]), the corporate body name may be combined into one heading with the term in this thesaurus. See “**4. Special practices for using this thesaurus with LCSH**” below.

## 2. Search for the concept

Three lists are provided

- an alphabetical list of terms (including the unused, or nonpreferred terms)
- an alphabetical overview, and
- a hierarchical list.

The preferred terms are distinguished by [**bold text**]. Your institution may wish to use a nonpreferred term from another thesaurus indicated in the hierarchical list. (Check for your institution's policy.)

## 3. Use the term

Encoding examples:

- MARC, faceted approach:  
610 20 \$\$a Harvard University.  
650 07 \$\$a Students. \$\$2 tucua  
650 07 \$\$a Alcohol use. \$\$2 tucua
- EAD, faceted approach  
<controlaccess>  
<corpname source="lcnaf">Harvard University</corpname>  
<subject source="tucua">Students</subject>  
<subject source="tucua">Alcohol use</subject>  
</controlaccess>

## 4. Special practices for using this thesaurus with LCSH

Many college and university archives fall administratively within libraries, and they therefore make use of an integrated library system. Such systems typically use LCSH and MARC encoding (MACHine Readable Cataloging), and many use the services of the library cataloging staff.

There is an inherent conflict between LCSH, which is a precoordinated system, and this thesaurus, which is faceted. The thesaurus makes itself useful for LCSH practitioners, as an index to LCSH, in the following ways:

- LCSH term are identified as such and included in the alphabetical list.

- In the details about an individual term, the LCSH terms are listed first under the "Use For/Source" section.
- The list is not a comprehensive faceting of LCSH, rather, it is an easy way to gain conceptual access to LCSH terms most commonly used in college or university archives.

Here are two concepts to illustrate the faceted vs. precoordinated conflict: *Students* and *Alcohol*. A precoordinated system such as LCSH combines these two concepts into a single heading:

- *Students -- Alcohol use*  
A faceted approach renders these concepts in separate headings:
- *Students*
- *Alcohol use*

With the addition of the institutional name concept, such as Harvard University, the correct, precoordinated LCSH heading would be:

- *Harvard University -- Students -- Alcohol use*

In the alphabetical listing under *Alcohol use*, the fact that this is not an exact match for an LCSH subdivision will be indicated by the fact that the thesaurus is not identified as the source for this term, and the reader will be referred to the hierarchical listing. In the alphabetical listing, under *Students -- Alcohol use* there will be an indication that this is an LCSH seed term and therefore an exact match for an LCSH subdivision and the reader will be referred to the hierarchical heading for *Alcohol use*, where the full LCSH term is noted as a cross-reference.

When the terms are used as precoordinated headings, and the institutional name comes from the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF) but the thesaurus term does not match an LCSH term, there is no authoritative practice for encoding the resulting hybrid. Neither MARC nor Encoded Archival Description (EAD) have a means of indicating multiple sources for a single thesaurus term. The exact format for encoding these must be part of institutional policy. Some institutions may determine that the first part of the heading should direct the encoding, regardless of the subdivision source. Other institutions may wish to encode these headings as local, especially if they use automated authority control that might change headings erroneously. These examples are offered to facilitate internal institutional discussion:

- MARC, precoordinated approach, LCSH term matches thesaurus term:  
610 20 \$\$a Harvard University \$\$x Students \$\$x Alcohol use.
- LCSH/MARC, precoordinated approach, encoded by local MARC policy as a local corporate name heading:  
693 29 \$\$a Harvard University \$\$x Financial aid. \$\$5hua
- LCSH/MARC, precoordinated approach, encoded as if LCSH:  
610 20 \$\$a Harvard University \$\$x Financial aid.
- EAD, precoordinated approach, encoded as local topical heading:  
<controlaccess>  
<topic source="[tucua]">Harvard University -- Financial aid.</topic>  
</controlaccess>

- EAD, precoordinated approach, encoded as if LCSH.  
<controlaccess>  
<corpname source="lcnaf">Harvard University -- Financial  
aid.</corpname>  
</controlaccess>

### III. Methods of Assembling the Thesaurus

The approximately 1,300 terms in this thesaurus come from many sources; before weeding, there were nearly 5,000 seed terms that originated in several existing controlled and uncontrolled vocabularies. These source vocabularies were:

- Chapman University (unpublished)
- Harvard University Archives (unpublished)
- *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (Washington, DC : Library of Congress)
- Mount Holyoke College (unpublished)
- *Thesaurus of university terms developed at Case Western Reserve University Archives* (Chicago, IL : Society of American Archivists, 1986)
- University of Illinois (unpublished)
- University of Michigan (unpublished)

A few terms have been added by the editor to fill obvious omissions in the hierarchy, and reference has been made both to the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) thesaurus and to Helen Willa Samuels's *Varsity Letters* for enlightenment and clarity, although neither of these sources was incorporated.

LCSH is the preferred term unless the editor found a strong sense of the term's abandonment in contemporary usage by comparing the LCSH term with the terms used in the other thesauri. Some terms may inspire controversy; in such cases the policy of preferring LCSH over other terms was the rule. Submission of the terms in this thesaurus as new terms or as cross-references to the Library of Congress through the Subject Authority Cooperative Program of the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (SACO) are encouraged.

### IV. Resources for Establishing Excluded Terms

Excluded terms may be established in accordance with local, national, or international naming conventions.

Many college and university archives in the United States are either part of their parent institution's library system and/or describe their holdings in integrated library systems; therefore, the following paragraphs provide pointers to the resources used to establish names that would be valid in such settings.

There is increasing use among archivists of *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS), ISAD(G) and Encoded Archival Context for the creation of personal, corporate, and family

names (EAC-CPF). The most prominent naming standard in automated library systems is *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, Second Edition* (AACR2) [or its successor standard]. Many terms excluded from this thesaurus will already have been established according to this standard and will have been listed in the Name Authority File or Subject Authority File maintained by the Library of Congress (LC). Many non-US terms are also available in these files.

A good resource to consult is the *Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual*. A number of campus features or facilities will fall into the category that the Library of Congress calls “problematic headings.” The “problem” to which this phrase refers is the gray area in which there may be valid reasons to consider a term to be both a named topic and a corporate name. To determine which encoding to apply, see Section H405 of the manual.

Examples below in bold are instances of college- or university-related names. Where no college- or university-related name was established by LC, an example of any LC name of that category has been chosen at random. A reference to the Library of Congress Control Number (LCCN) accompanies any example established by LC.

### Buildings

See the *Subject Cataloging Manual* of the Library of Congress, Section H1334 “Buildings and other structures” for more information. Buildings and parts of buildings are coded 110 in MARC.

#### Whole buildings

Example: *Grady Gammage Memorial Auditorium (Tempe, Ariz.)* (LCCN: sh 99004555)

As of the writing of this introduction, AACR2 and Library of Congress practice requires that building names be constructed as corporate bodies in the Subject Authority File. Building names are all qualified by place. Some may argue with the wisdom of establishing buildings as corporate bodies that are not subordinate bodies to the name of the institution that owns the building. Indeed, older headings for buildings were formed this way (e.g. Bowdoin College. Walker Art Building). However, the wisdom of the current practice is obvious if one considers how college and university growth overtakes neighboring buildings or how often universities and colleges buy, sell, or trade buildings with municipalities. A building's owner is not in all cases an eternal attribute, but its location rarely changes significantly.

#### Parts of buildings

Example: Agassiz Theatre (Agassiz House, Cambridge, Mass.)

Example: Mary Pickford Theater (Library of Congress James Madison Memorial Building, Washington, D.C.) (LC Control No.: sh 90004988)

As of the writing of this introduction, AACR2 and Library of Congress practice require that parts of buildings be constructed as corporate bodies. Parts of buildings are all qualified by the building name and place.

Structures other than buildings: bridges, gates, monuments, etc.

The MARC coding the following examples varies. See the *Subject Cataloging Manual* of the Library of Congress, Section H1334 “Buildings and other structures” for more information. Some entities that might be considered as structures (canals, dams, and mines) are treated as geographic areas.

Example: Gateway Arch (Saint Louis, Mo.) (LC Control No.: sh 85053510))

Example: Golden Gate Bridge (San Francisco, Calif.) (LC Control No.: sh 85055751))

Example: Statue of Liberty (New York, N.Y.) (LC Control No.: sh 85127593)

Example: Rodin, Auguste, 1840-1917. Balzac (LC Control Nos.: n 98098019 and sh 85114816)

Geographic areas: city sections, gardens, parks, forests, canals, etc.

MARC coding for most of these entities is 150 or 151, depending on whether the area is 1) a political jurisdiction, or 2) a non-jurisdictional geographic name. Library of Congress practice is explained in the Subject Cataloging Manual Section H690. Many such names, including those for non-U.S. locations, appear in the U.S. authority file maintained at the Library of Congress.

Example: New Haven Green (New Haven, Conn.) (LC Control No.: sh 93002683)

Example: Liberal Arts Quad (Seattle, Wash.) (LC Control No.: sh2003009674)

Example: Harvard Forest (Mass. : Forest) (LC Control No.: sh 85059129)

Example: Memorial Arboretum (Lancaster, Pa.) (LC Control No.: n 88160736)

Corporate bodies

Repositories should establish a practice for the establishment of corporate body names. Archivists who are sharing data with an integrated library system will wish to consult with librarians on the formulation of corporate body names.

University names

The thesaurus does not list the names of colleges and universities. Most college and university names will have been established by national libraries as corporate bodies under AACR2 and/or another naming authority. Many such names, including those for non-U.S. institutions, appear in the U.S. name authority file maintained at the Library of Congress.

Names of College or University Offices or Departments

(e.g., Harvard University. Dept. of Physics, Yale Babylonian Collection, Cornell Law School)

The thesaurus does not list the names of offices within individual colleges and universities nor the constituent parts of colleges or universities. Names for these offices may be established following AACR2 and Library of Congress practice. See AACR2 Chapter 24 Sections 12, 13, and 14 and its successor standard.

## V. Resources for Form and Genre Terms

The *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (AAT), part of the Getty Vocabulary Program at The Getty Research Institute ([http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting\\_research/vocabularies/aat/](http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/)) already contains most of the form and genre terms included in this thesaurus. The editor has decided that instead of creating a completely separate form/genre list, it would be best to contribute unique terms to the AAT. Because many of the form/genre terms are also topical terms, these terms will have a continued presence in this thesaurus, with a note indicating that use as a form/genre term is appropriate.