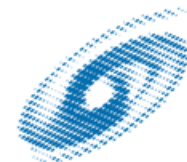
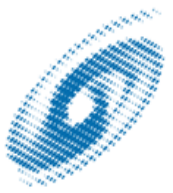


Developing the Archival Metrics Toolkits: Conceptual Development

Morgan Daniels
University of Michigan
School of Information

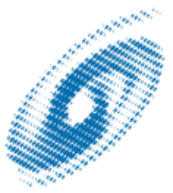


SCHOOL OF INFORMATION
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



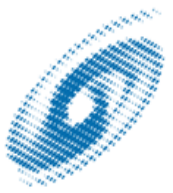
Archival Metrics Project

- **Five year project**
 - **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Planning Grant (January – December 2004)**
 - **Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Grant (June 2005 – March 2008)**
- **Promote a culture of assessment in archives**
- **Develop standardized user-based evaluation tools and other performance measures**



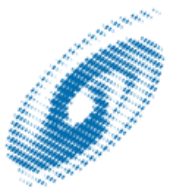
Archival Metrics Team

- **Dr. Helen Tibbo, University of North Carolina**
- **Drs. Wendy Duff and Joan Cherry, University of Toronto**
- **Dr. Elizabeth Yakel and Aprille McKay, J.D., University of Michigan**
- **Doctoral students:**
 - **Morgan Daniels and Magia Krause (UM)**
 - **Luanne Freund (Toronto)**



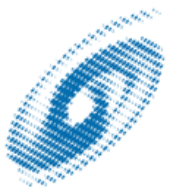
The Extended Team

- **Laura Clark Brown, U. of North Carolina**
- **Janet Gertz, Columbia**
- **Karen Jania, U. of Michigan**
- **Diane Kaplan, Yale**
- **Rob Spindler
Arizona State University**
- **Fritz Pannekoek
Athabasca University**
- **Robin Chandler
California Digital Library**
- **Chris Prom, U. of Illinois**
- **Heather Briston
U. of Oregon**
- **Sharon Larade
U. of Toronto**
- **Mark Greene
U. of Wyoming**
- **Mike Smith
Wayne State U.**
- **Mike Moir
York University**
- **Bill Joyce, Penn State U.**



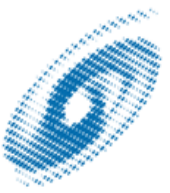
Archival Metrics Toolkits

- **Developed to meet the needs of archivists in evaluating their services to specific user groups:**
 - **Researcher**
 - **Archival Website**
 - **Online Finding Aids**
 - **Student Researcher**
 - **Teaching Support**



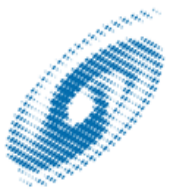
Creating a Culture of Assessment

- **User-based evaluation needs to be based on concepts that are specific to archives and special collections**
- **If archivists do not do this for themselves, someone else will**
- **Archival Metrics Toolkits developed by and for archivists**
 - **Collaboration between researchers and practitioners**



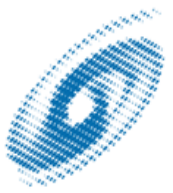
Questionnaire Development

- **Analysis of other survey instruments**
- **Review of the literature**
- **Interviews with archivists, faculty, students to identify core concepts for evaluation**
- **Conceptual Framework**
- **Creation of the questionnaires**
- **Testing the questionnaires, survey administration procedures, and the instructions analysis**



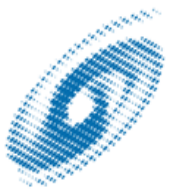
Interviews: Reference staff expertise (1)

- **Student: He told me [a historical figure's] letters were good to look at and so, by dates. I knew when he died. I knew when he had done stuff. So with dates, I was the one who asked for the different parts. So I did have that prior information. Because I knew nothing about that kind of stuff before. And so this guy, he knew about [the historical figure]– the archivist knew [the historical figure] – but he also knew about people who he worked with and, you know, so he knew the bigger picture. I just knew dates – around '32 and then around '66 and then around whatever, but he knew the bigger picture. (MSM02, lines 293-300)**



Interviews: Reference staff expertise (2)

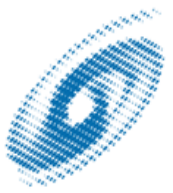
- **Archivist: Sometimes, if I have time, I will kind of explain to them what's helpful if they do come back. Saying, you know, "We don't always understand the subject. We're generalists, we're not specialists, so be willing to talk to us about what you've done so far and what you've found." And just a little bit about, you know, the fact that we're all – there are [many] of us – you'll see different faces, it's not bad if you want to ask the same question to several of us because you might get different information that will be useful to you. (MAM02 lines 484-490)**



Literature: Reference staff expertise

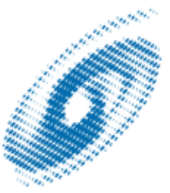
- “The final dimension of knowledge of archival theory, practice, and procedures is awareness of the limits of one’s own archival intelligence and the ability to identify the limits of knowledge in others, particularly reference archivists. Researchers acquiring expertise were aware of their own limitations and/or the limitations of reference archivists. Correct assessments of self-knowledge and the archivist’s knowledge were key to developing an accurate picture of existing limitations and to developing strategies for working around them.”

Yakel, E. & Torres, D. A. (2003). AI: Archival intelligence and user expertise. *American Archivist*, 66(1), 51-78 (p. 67).



Reference staff expertise: Question development

- **“Please provide feedback on our staff: Efficiency of staff in retrieving materials; Subject knowledge of the staff; Availability of the staff; Approachability of the staff; Helpfulness of the staff” (Researcher questionnaire)**
- **“Please rate how well the following met your teaching needs this past term: Reference staff expertise” (Instructor questionnaire)**
 - Respondents gave each measure a score of 1 to 5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent



Conceptual Framework

Context of the User

Questionnaire

Demographics

Information Need

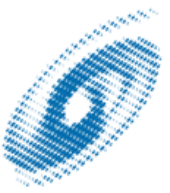
Users' Reactions to Services

Quality of the Interaction

Quality of access systems

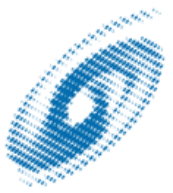
Physical Facilities

Learning Outcomes



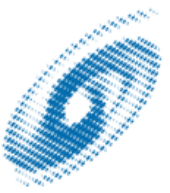
Context of the user

- **Questionnaire**
- **Information need / Research Question**
- **Demographic information**



Context: Information Need

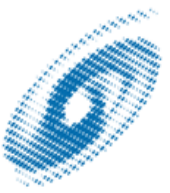
- **“Recall your most recent visit to the [repository’s] website. What question or interest prompted your visit?”
(Website Questionnaire)**
- **“What question or interest brings you to search the [repository’s] collections today?” (Online Finding Aids Questionnaire)**



Context:

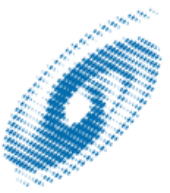
Demographic Information

- **“How long have you been using archival materials?” (Researcher Questionnaire)**
- **“How many times have you used the [repository]?” (Researcher Questionnaire)**
- **Age, status, affiliation**



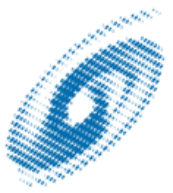
Users' evaluation

- **Quality of the interaction**
- **Access systems**
- **Physical facility: Information space**
- **Learning outcomes**



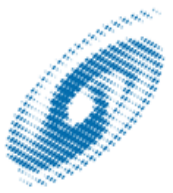
Quality of the Interaction

- **Perceived expertise of the archivist**
- **Availability of staff to assist researchers**
 - **Instructors and students in the interviews returned to these dimensions again and again as important in a successful visit.**



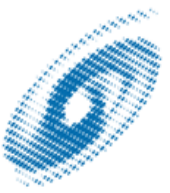
Quality of the Interaction

- **“Please provide feedback on our staff.”**
 - **Subject knowledge of the staff**
 - **Availability of the staff**
 - **Efficiency of staff in retrieving materials**
 - **Helpfulness of the staff**
 - **Approachability of the staff**
(Researcher Questionnaire)



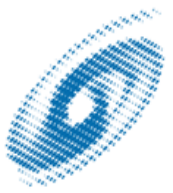
Access Systems

- **“Have you used a finding aid in the form of a printed document or book from the [repository] for your current project?”**
 - **Quality of the content**
 - **Ease of use**
 - **Clarity of the language used**
 - **Overall usefulness**
- (Researcher Questionnaire)**



Physical Facilities

- **“Please indicate your level of satisfaction with the following facilities and services at this archives.”**
 - Hours of service
 - Temperature
 - Lighting
 - Noise level
 - Study areas
 - Furniture
 - Informational/navigational signs
 - Physical Access to the building
 - Microfilm and fiche viewing facilities
 - Internet access
 - Reference books
 - Exhibits
 - Photocopying / duplication services
(Researcher Questionnaire)



Learning Outcomes

- **“What is the most important thing you have learned this semester to help you conduct archival research?”**
- **“Based on your experience this semester, how confident are you in your ability to do archival research?”**
(Student Questionnaire)



Archival Metrics

Promoting a Culture of Assessment in Archives and Special Collections

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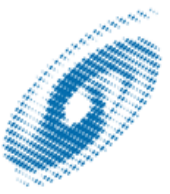
Archival Metrics: Purpose and Goals

Innovative archivists, manuscript curators, and records managers want to know the answers to these questions:

- How effectively does this repository support our users' research needs?
- Are we learning as an organization by using data collected about the use of our collections to drive program improvement?
- Can we demonstrate our effectiveness in support of our unit's goals?

There are two drivers for these questions: first, an internal quest for improvement in services to researchers; and second, a need to provide accountability to resource providers, including the public, administrators of parent organizations, elected officials, and grant-makers. Archivists and records managers who pursue excellent programs and services know that they must gather data to document their progress toward their goals. These same data also aid funders, who need to make the best use of scarce resources, and want to support organizations that measurably support the delivery of good services to the public and members and administrators of their institutions.

Our project seeks to promote a culture of assessment in the archival domain by creating standardized user-based evaluation tools and other performance measures. By centralizing the development of these tools we help archivists and records managers overcome impediments to implementing assessment and improvement programs. Some managers, for example, may not undertake evaluation activities because of heavy existing workloads and lack of expertise. Our project has shouldered the research



Thank you

and

Questions