

University of Kentucky

UKnowledge

Library Presentations

University of Kentucky Libraries

10-4-2018

Appraisal of Faculty Personal Papers in American Public University Archives: The Public Records Retention Schedule versus Cultural and Historical Selection Criteria and the Role of the Archives in the University

Ruth E. Bryan

University of Kentucky, ruth.bryan@uky.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://uknowledge.uky.edu/libraries_present



Part of the [Archival Science Commons](#)

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

Repository Citation

Bryan, Ruth E., "Appraisal of Faculty Personal Papers in American Public University Archives: The Public Records Retention Schedule versus Cultural and Historical Selection Criteria and the Role of the Archives in the University" (2018). *Library Presentations*. 193.

https://uknowledge.uky.edu/libraries_present/193

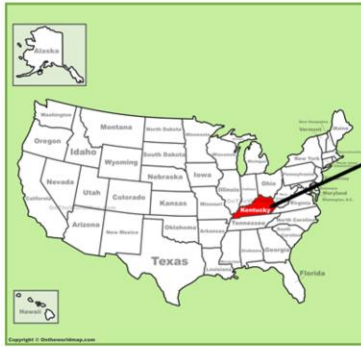
This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the University of Kentucky Libraries at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Library Presentations by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu.

**Appraisal of Faculty Personal Papers in
American Public University Archives:
The Public Records Retention Schedule
versus
Cultural and Historical Selection Criteria and
the Role of the Archives in the University**

Ruth E. Bryan, CA
International Council on Archives
Section on University and Research Institution Archives
University of Salamanca, Spain
Oct. 4, 2018

Buenas tardes, colegas. I am Ruth Bryan, University Archivist at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY, USA. In this presentation, I'll be looking at appraisal criteria for faculty personal papers in American public university archives, exploring what aspects of the university can be documented through faculty papers.

Greetings from Lexington, Kentucky, USA



The Blue Grass Region of Kentucky: Horses and Bourbon (oh, and basketball)

Univ of KY:

- King Library
- UK HealthCare
- Young Library



Kentucky is in the southeastern part of the United States. Lexington is in the center of the state in the Bluegrass region (known for horses, bourbon, and the University of Kentucky, especially the UK men's basketball team).

University of Kentucky

- ▶ Established: 1865
- ▶ Current enrollment: 30,473 (undergraduate & graduate)
- ▶ Number of degree-granting colleges: 18
- ▶ Number of majors: 200+
- ▶ Faculty: 2,502; staff: 13,940
- ▶ Overall budget: \$3,368M

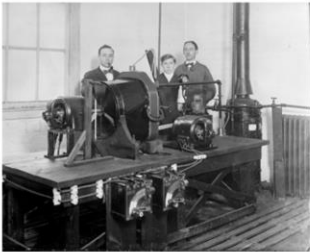


Gatton Student Center with
Wildcat mascot sculpture

The university was established in 1865 and has a current enrollment of 30,500 students, with 18 colleges granting degrees in over 200 majors. There are 2,500 faculty and just under 14,000 staff, with an overall budget of 3,400 million dollars.

University of Kentucky

- ▶ One of 50 “1862” Land-grant institutions
- ▶ Also 20 “1890s” and 36 “1994s”
- ▶ One of eight universities in the US with schools in Agriculture, Engineering, Medicine, and Pharmacy on a single, contiguous campus (all are 1862 land-grants)



Engineering lab, early 20th C.



Experiment Station, 1940

The University of Kentucky is one of 50, 1862, land-grant institutions, established in each state by money obtained from the sale of federal land. Land-grants were established to teach agriculture, the mechanic arts, military tactics, and classical studies to students who couldn't afford to attend the existing private universities. Subsequent federal funding established two other sets of land-grants, and also established an agricultural experiment station and an extension service to disseminate research from the agricultural experiment stations in each state.

Land-grants thus have a significant state-wide service component as an additional part of their research and teaching mission.

University of Kentucky Public Records

- ▶ State/public agency, created and funded by the state
- ▶ A public record = Any record prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by a public agency
- ▶ Including any UK record
- ▶ Necessary for Open Records



Radio Studio, 1949

As a land-grant institution, the University of Kentucky is a state or public agency, created and funded by the state. Thus, any record prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or retained by the university is a public record. Public records are necessary to support each state's open records law that ensures the public has access to public records of government bodies.

University of Kentucky Public Records

- ▶ Records retention and disposition follows the State University Model Records Retention Schedule
- ▶ University Archivist uses the schedule as **a** selection tool
- ▶ Records Manager uses schedule as **the** selection tool
- ▶ Works well for university administrative records
- ▶ **But WAIT!**
- ▶ What about university faculty papers?

Home Economics Club, 1916



By state law, all public universities in KY must use the State University Model Records Retention Schedule to manage their records. As the university archivist, I use the schedule as **a** selection tool. Records must be kept for their retention period, but sometimes I choose to keep them permanently, even if the schedule indicates they should be discarded. This is because I'm building a university archives of records of historical value.

The records manager uses the schedule as **the** selection tool, following the retention and disposition requirements, because she is assisting administrative offices to be efficient in managing their records and helping the university save money and reduce risk.

The schedule as an appraisal tool works well for university administrative records, but what about for university faculty papers, by which I mean documents created or acquired by faculty at the archivists' university?

Faculty papers @ UK Special Collections Research Center

- ▶ SCRC collects rare and unique materials in all formats documenting the social, cultural, economic, and political history of Kentucky
 - ▶ 65,000 rare books; 175,000 books overall
 - ▶ 10,000 oral histories
 - ▶ 50,000 cubic feet of archival collections; 10,000 cf of university records
 - ▶ 12,000+ researchers per year; 60+ educational sessions per year
 - ▶ 36 total faculty and staff

The records manager reports to me, the university archivist, and both of us work in the Special Collections Research Center, a division of the University of Kentucky Libraries. Special Collections collects rare and unique materials in all formats documenting the social, cultural, economic, and political history of Kentucky. The permanent and historical records of the university, including faculty papers, are a part of Special Collections' larger documentary mission.

Faculty papers @ UK Special Collections Research Center

- ▶ SCRC documentary mission = Hybrid repository
- ▶ Combined institutional repository and collecting repository

- ▶ = American “big tent philosophy” of archival selection

Basketball, 1900s



That documentary mission is a combined one: Special Collections is an institutional archival repository and a collecting archival repository. This hybrid Special Collections documentary mission follows the American “big tent philosophy” coined by archivist Frank Boles (p. 41) that archival repository missions can vary. So, in the US, archives can serve as both administrative documentation and cultural documentation.

Faculty papers @ UK Special Collections Research Center

- ▶ “Big tent” allows SCRC to acquire faculty papers to document:
 - ▶ University functions
 - ▶ Evidence of the individual’s research, teaching, service
 - ▶ Archives’ collection development policy
 - ▶ Gaps in the university’s official records.

Agriculture Economics
students, 1959



The big tent means that Special Collections can acquire faculty papers to document both university functions and gaps in the university’s official records, as well as to document the evidence of a faculty person’s individual research, teaching, and service and in support of the overall collection development policy.

Faculty papers @ SCRC

- ▶ Faculty = individual scholarship, teaching, service **AND**
- ▶ Faculty direct educational policy; serve as administrators
- ▶ **SO...**
- ▶ Faculty papers = university/public record **AND** private papers

Student protest, 1970



In fact, individual faculty papers collections themselves can be considered both administrative records and personal papers, because of the roles faculty have at the university.

So, individual faculty papers can also be considered both public records (owned by the people through the state) and private papers (owned by the individual creator).

What's the Problem?

- ▶ Are the documents created and used by faculty public records, private, or a combination?
 - ▶ Part answer: Intellectual Property regulation (UK AR 7:6)
- ▶ How much does the retention schedule apply to faculty documents?
- ▶ Can I continue to make appraisal exceptions to the schedule?
- ▶ Do I need to rethink the role faculty papers play in the archives?
- ▶ What should RM training for faculty consist of (depends on if papers are public, private, or combination)?



Prof. Sheila Tobias, 1980s

So, if faculty papers operate as both public records and private personal papers, but since we have a state law that mandates how we deal with and select public records, and, we have archival practice that guides how we deal with and select private records, this raises several questions:

Are the documents created and used by faculty public records, private records, or a combination? The university has a regulation that disclaims university ownership of intellectual property in traditional products of scholarly activity, but this doesn't cover tangible property ownership. So, how much does the retention schedule apply to faculty documents? Can I continue to make appraisal exceptions to the schedule? Do I need to rethink the role faculty papers play in the archives? What should records management training for faculty consist of?

Survey Other Archivists

- ▶ Sent 70 emails to 63 University Archives in US land-grant universities
 - ▶ 50 (out of 50 total) from 1862
 - ▶ 13 (out of 20 total) from 1890
- ▶ 35 questions about:
 - ▶ Faculty papers selection decisions and appraisal tools
 - ▶ Public records definitions
 - ▶ Demographic information
- ▶ Not all respondents answered all questions



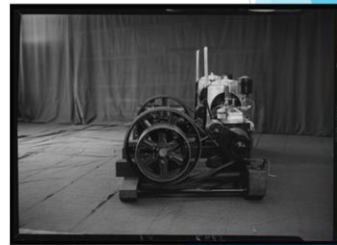
Research, 1980s

So, I decided to ask my colleagues. This summer, I sent 70 emails to 63 university archives in US land-grant universities. I asked 35 questions about whether they acquired faculty papers and how they select within and among them. I asked for their state's public records definitions and for demographic information about their archives.

Survey responses

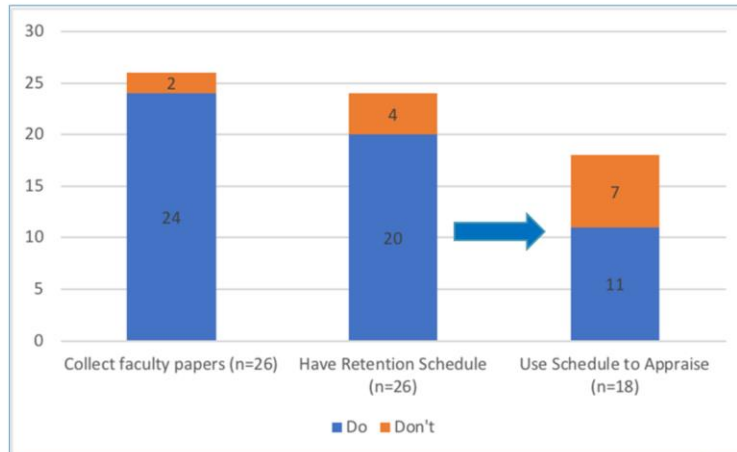
- ▶ 26 or 37% response rate, completed between July 26 and Aug 30
- ▶ 22 from the 1862 institutions
- ▶ 4 from the 1890 institutions
- ▶ Responses from all regions of the US
- ▶ Vast majority (21) are in Libraries

Aeronautical Research Lab, 1948



I had 26 responses, or a 37 percent response rate, with all regions of the US represented. Interestingly, the vast majority of university archives are housed within the university library.

Survey responses



1. 24 of 26 or 92% collect faculty papers
2. 20 of 26 or 77% have or use some kind of records retention schedule
3. Of those 20, 11 or 61% (of 18) use the retention schedule to appraise within faculty papers.
4. Of those 20, 7 or 39% (of 18) don't use the retention schedule

Survey responses: Reasons for collecting

- ▶ (Number of comments = 14)
- ▶ Support SC collecting areas (6)
- ▶ Document faculty roles in
 - ▶ Service (5)
 - ▶ Academics (4)
 - ▶ Both (4)
- ▶ Document underrepresented groups and events (3)
- ▶ Document entire life/career (1)
- ▶ “Impact,” “success,” “distinction”

Reasons for collecting faculty papers included to support the special collections collecting areas; to document faculty roles in service, academics, or both; to document underrepresented groups and events; and to document a faculty person’s entire life or career. Many respondents used the words “impact,” “success,” and “distinction” as a reason for acquiring an individual faculty person’s papers.

Reasons for collecting faculty papers:

- ▶ “We are open to faculty papers in all disciplines and formats, but focus on our historical collecting strength areas in traditional land-grant topics...” Consideration will also be given to faculty with a national reputation, a topical relationship to other collection strengths, or with connections to underdocumented communities.
- ▶ “Faculty papers offer insight into the history and operation of the University that otherwise may be lost by relying only on official administrative records...Faculty papers document the academic life of the University and relate one's academic career to his or her total interests, thereby constituting an important record and providing a full compliment of perspectives regarding the historical activities of [the university].”

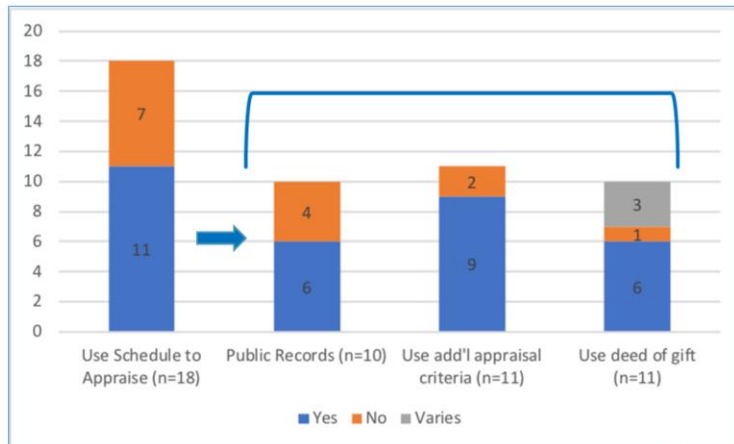
For example, one respondent said (read second quote).

Reasons for collecting faculty papers:

- ▶ “We consider length of tenure, professional standing in the faculty member’s field of study, and significance of their work to the local or statewide community.”
- ▶ “We are most interested in the papers of faculty with national reputation in their academic field and/or with significant impact at our university. We have focused attention on those faculty that have been awarded Distinguished Professor status...”

Another respondent said (read second quote).

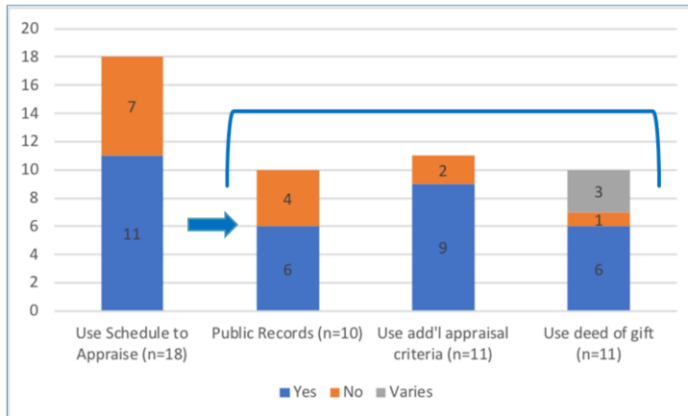
Of the 11 or 61% who use the schedule as an appraisal tool:



Looking more closely at the 11 respondents, or 61%, who use the retention schedule as an appraisal tool:

1. 6 or 60% (of 10) consider faculty papers public records; 4 or 40% consider faculty papers to be private
2. 9 or 82% use additional appraisal criteria, while 2 or 18% do not
3. 6 or 60% (of 11) use a deed of gift as the acquisition form, 1 or 10% use a transfer form, 3 or 30% use different forms depending on circumstances

Of the 11 or 61% who use the schedule as an appraisal tool:

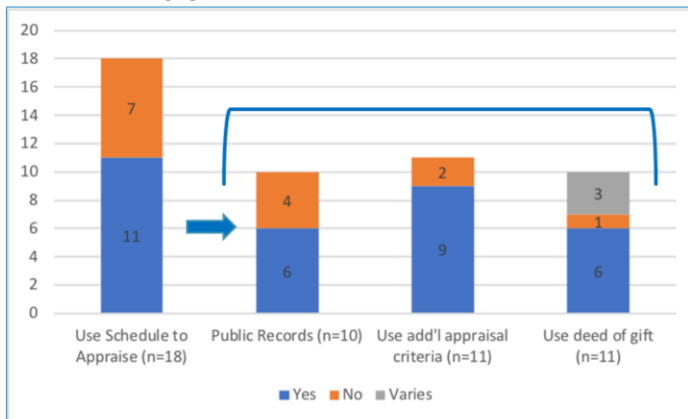


Comments on faculty papers as public records:

- "...[T]here are times that public records are included in what comes to the archives from [faculty]."
- "[only public] unless they are in an administrative role."
- "Faculty papers are public records at a state institution to the extent that they document work performed as an employee of that institution. Faculty papers may sometimes include personal materials that do not fall in this category."

Respondents' comments about faculty papers as public records included (read first and third quotes).

Of the 11 or 61% who use the schedule as an appraisal tool

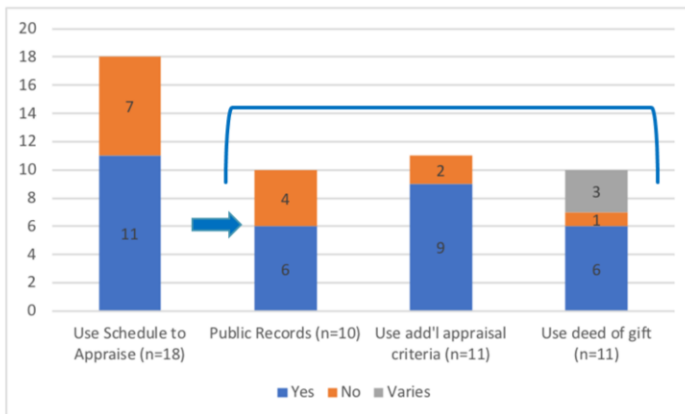


Comments on using additional appraisal criteria:

- "I look for definitive work within the faculty member's field, data with long-term research value, and anything which documents the history of the institution and its communities."
- "We have a guide that identifies the types of materials often found in faculty papers that we may keep and those we will not."
- "Collection guidelines for series level content (e.g., correspondence, data files, photographs, etc.)."
- "We do not keep research files/copies."

Respondents' comments on using additional appraisal criteria beyond the retention schedule (read first and second comments).

Of the 11 or 61% who use the schedule as an appraisal tool



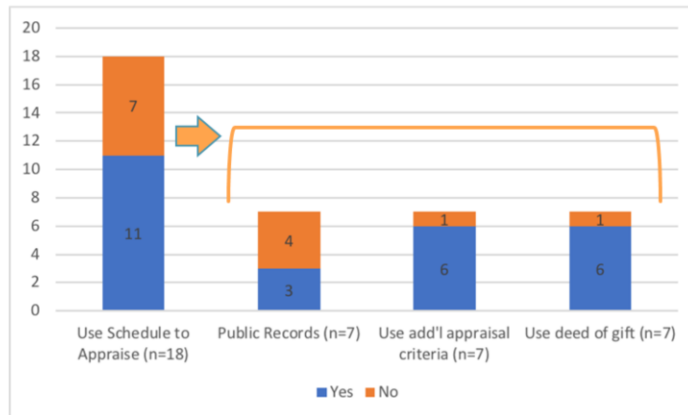
Comments on using a deed of gift:

- “The Deed of Gift specifies and documents the understanding between the faculty member and the archives regarding the transfer of property and intellectual rights.”
- “We treat faculty papers more like donations than institutional records transfers so a deed of gift has always felt appropriate.”

Respondents’ comments on using a deed of gift as the acquisition form include (read comments):

Interestingly, using a records schedule as an appraisal tool would seem to indicate that faculty papers are public records; yet, the majority of the 11 respondents use a deed of gift or varied acquisition forms, indicating that, for them, faculty papers are considered either privately owned by the faculty member or are joint private/public.

Of the 7 or 39% who do not use the retention schedule as an appraisal tool:



Comments on public records:

- “Some portions of the faculty papers are probably public records, but we treat them as private materials.”
- “I’d consider records of administrative work public records, but not research/teaching which is what we...normally [collect] when we collect faculty papers.”

Looking a bit more closely at the 7 respondents, or 39%, who don’t use the retention schedule as an appraisal tool:

1. 4 or 57% consider faculty papers to be private, while 3 or 43% consider faculty papers to be public.

2. 6 or 86% reported using other appraisal criteria other than the records retention schedule, which makes sense, as they reported not using the retention schedule as a selection tool.

3. 6 or 86% use a deed of gift or varied forms as the acquisition form. 1 uses a transfer form

Respondents’ comments on faculty papers as public records include (read comments).

In this group, not using the schedule as an appraisal tool is aligned with considering faculty papers to be privately owned.

Conclusions: Public vs Private Records

- ▶ Deed of gift vs transfer form is main method of acquisition
- ▶ Quite a lot of variation in whether faculty papers are considered public records or not
- ▶ Many consider portions of collections to be public/private
- ▶ Records retention schedule plays a role in appraisal within collections



Cal Wallace speaking on "The New Non-violent Way," 1969

Some conclusions from the survey results.

1. The deed of gift is the main method of acquisition.

Regardless of whether archivists consider faculty papers to be public or private records.

Regardless of whether the records schedule is used as a selection tool or not.

2. There is quite a lot of variation in whether faculty papers are considered public records or not.

Many consider portions of collections to be public/private.

3. The records retention schedule plays a role in appraisal within collections.

Regardless of whether archivists use a deed of gift or another acquisition form.

Regardless of whether archivists consider faculty papers overall to be public or private records.

Conclusions: Role of Faculty Papers in Archives

- ▶ Faculty papers are collected to:
 - ▶ Support the collecting areas of the overall Special Collections
 - ▶ Document the faculty person's scholarship and research
 - ▶ Provide insight into the University as a whole
 - ▶ Document underrepresented groups or events
- ▶ Many respondents prioritize which faculty papers to acquire based in success, impact, or distinction in field or in university

University attention to disabled students' needs, 1970s



Faculty papers are collected in order to support the collecting areas of the special collections and archives; document the faculty person's scholarship and research; provide insight into the university as a whole; and document underrepresented groups or events.

So, through the individual papers of faculty, land-grant university archives function to not only provide documentation of the university's administrative activities and functions, but also the university's role in research, education, and service. The archives can also function as a correction to the prevailing master narrative about groups or events by acquiring documents that provide a viewpoint different from or in addition to the official university record. Faculty papers can assist with this documentary goal, as well.

And, again, many respondents prioritize which faculty papers to acquire based in some measure of the faculty person's success, impact, or distinction in their field or in the university.

Directions for SCRC/UK

- ▶ Our acquisition methods and use of schedule practices are basically in line with colleagues
- ▶ Move to considering faculty papers as privately owned but including public records
- ▶ Still need to consider how to discuss managing those specific public records with faculty
- ▶ Land-grant mission = widening collecting criteria for which faculty papers to acquire

Melanie Warren, starting center,
Lady Kats basketball team, 1986



Some directions from the conclusions based in the survey results for university archives at the university of Kentucky:

Our acquisition methods and use of the schedule practices are basically in line with our colleagues. We should move to considering faculty papers as privately owned but including public records, which means we will be using different appraisal criteria within individual collections. We still need to consider how to discuss managing those specific public records with faculty.

And, finally, because of our land-grant service mission, I suggest that we should strive to widen the collecting criteria for which faculty papers to acquire beyond distinction in career and into service more broadly.

Selected Bibliography

- ▶ Frank Boles, *Selecting and Appraising Archives and Manuscripts*, Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 2005.
- ▶ “Land-Grant University FAQ.” Association of Public Land-Grant Universities. <http://www.aplu.org/about-us/history-of-aplu/what-is-a-land-grant-university/index.html>, accessed 9/12/2018.
- ▶ Laver, Tara Zachary. "In a Class by Themselves: Faculty Papers at Research Universities and Manuscript Repositories." *The American Archivist*, Vol. 66 (Spring/Summer 2003): pp. 159-169.
- ▶ Mayer, William J. *The Management of College and University Archives*. Metuchen, NJ: The Society of American Archivists and The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992. pp. 66-67.
- ▶ Sternberg, Robert. "Preface." Robert J. Sternberg, Ed. *The Modern Land-Grant University*. West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2014.

Thank you. Here is my selected bibliography.

Ruth Bryan, CA
University Archivist
ruth.bryan@uky.edu

Mary Hester Cooper, University
Archivist, 1956-1970



And here is my contact information. Muchas gracias por su atencion.