NYU Cinema Studies MIAP  
Fall 2014  

Conservation and Preservation: Principles  

Ver. 1.0 09/03/14 (DRAFT in progress, for class discussion)  

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Class Schedule: Fridays, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m., with some additional alternate scheduling  

Office Hours: by appointment  

COURSE DESCRIPTION  

An introduction to the basic principles and methods of conserving and preserving the wide range of materials found in libraries, archives, special and heritage collections. Topics include the history of preservation, collections care, maintenance and environmental issues, commercial preservation options, selection for preservation, security, issues in paper and photographic preservation and conservation, disaster planning and recovery, issues relating to non-print materials, preservation reformatting, digital imaging, the preservation and responsibility for cultural heritage, and public policy for preservation.  

*** Two three hour class sessions on still photography have been scheduled at the Metropolitan Museum of Art with Katherine Sanderson, assistant conservator of photographs. The first is on Friday October 31st from 3-6 pm and the second session is on Friday November 7th from 3-6 pm.  

*** Two Monday or Tuesday classes/site visits will be scheduled, one at the NYPL Manhattan central building and one at the NYPL Library Services center in Queens.  

Other site visits and guests may be arranged as class interests arise.  

Directions and details for all site visits will be provided.  

COURSE INSTRUCTIONAL AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES  

To introduce students to the:  

1. Issues and options for the preservation of collections in all formats  

2. Causes of collection deterioration and options for prolonging useful longevity
3. Roles of collection stewards in the conservation and preservation of collections to ensure enduring access

4. Tools available in the conservation and preservation field

5. Need for networking, staff and user education and training.

Students completing this course should:

1. understand the nature of current preservation challenges, their origins and the resources and possible solutions to address them.

2. understand and be able to identify preservation needs and the issues to be addressed in implementing and administering a preservation program.

3. have necessary skills to evaluate technological options and strategies as they relate to specific collections and types of materials

4. understand issues related to fund raising and grant writing for preservation projects and collection needs.

5. be able to see the role of collection care and preservation within the larger institutional environment.

6. understand the role of preservation in the larger context of organizational administration, academic and research support, cultural heritage, and the broader context of societal communication, interaction and inquiry.

**GRADING**

**Evaluation of Student Performance will be based on:**

- General preservation survey report (30% of grade)
- Comparative review of two disaster plans assigned by instructor (25% of grade)
- 1-2 page review of each site visit and any class taught by guest speakers (20% of grade)
- Attendance and class participation (25% of grade), including: Readings, films, and essays as assigned and discussed Hands-on preservation activities in class
Description of Assignments:

Each written assignment should include the course title, assignment title, student’s name, date, and page number. There is no specific required writing style, but citations are required.

Grades will be assessed on adherence to instruction, clarity of presented information and level of its organization, and appropriateness/relevance to the assignment.

Comparative Disaster Preparedness Assignment: Due Friday October 31
Students will complete an assignment related to disaster planning and recovery, resulting in a written report/assessment. Details of the assignment will be provided in class.

Survey Assignment: Due December 12 (last class)
Students will conduct an overview preservation survey of a small library collection and produce a final report of findings and recommendations. Details of the assignment, including a required survey format, will be provided in class.

All written assignments must be submitted by either email (as PDF or Word attachments) or in hard copy in class.

Assignments are due by 4:00 pm on the date assigned.

Late Assignment Policy:
Assignments are due by the date and time listed in this syllabus. Students with reasonable cause for delayed work need to negotiate an alternate arrangement with the instructor in advance, if at all possible. Otherwise late work will be dropped two points if submitted in the first 24-hour period past the due date and an additional two points for each 24-hour period thereafter.

OUTLINE OF COURSE CONTENT AND LIST OF RESOURCES

Professional Tools:
Students are expected to become familiar with preservation and conservation journals, Internet lists and websites. Class conversation will depend on this familiarity.

Films to be viewed as part of class assignments and discussion:
- *Expert Series – Preserving the Charters of Freedom*, (National Archives and Records Administration) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHIQr9GjVXU
- *Saving the National Treasures*, NOVA, 2005.
- *Slow Fires: On the Preservation of the Human Record*, American Film Foundation; produced and directed by Terry Sanders; written by Ben Maddow and Terry Sanders, 1987.
Texts: There is no text book for the class. A variety of required readings will be assigned and are noted under each class session section (by class date and number).

Broad Resources for Your Exploration (optional, not required):

General Preservation and Collection Stewardship
- American Library Association, Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS), http://www.ala.org/alsc/mgrps/pars
  - Preservation, http://www.arl.org/preserv/
- Connecting to Collections, http://www.connectingtocollections.org/
- Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts, http://www.ccaha.org/
  - Heritage Health Index. Available at http://www.heritagepreservation.org/hhi/index.html
- Kenney, Anne and Deirdre Stam. The State of Preservation Programs in American College and Research Libraries: Building a Common Understanding

- National Archives and Records Administration (NARA),
  http://www.archives.gov/ and
  http://www.archives.gov/preservation/internal/index.html
- National Park Service,
  o Museum Handbook Part I, Museum Collections,
    http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/MHI/mushbk1.html
  o Conserve O'Grams,
    http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/publications/conserveogram/cons_toc.html

Conservation and Collections Care
- American Institute for Conservation (AIC), http://www.conservation-us.org/
  o Conservation OnLine (CoOL), http://cool.conservation-us.org/
  o ConsDistList Archives, cool.conservation-us.org/byform/mailing-lists/cdl/
- Conservation OnLine (CoOL) http://cool.conservation-us.org/
  o Disaster Preparedness and Response, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/disasters/
  o Mold, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/mold/
  o Pest Management, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/pest/
- Getty Conservation Institute, http://www.getty.edu/conservation/
• National Archives and Records Administration (NARA),
  http://www.archives.gov/ and
  http://www.archives.gov/preservation/internal/index.html
• PBS, Saving the National Treasures, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/charters/

Disaster Preparedness and Recovery
  http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/

Environmental Concerns
• Image Permanence Institute (IPI):
  http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/index.shtml
• IPI related sites:
  o eClimate Notebook, https://www.eclimatenotebook.com/
  o Dew Point Calculator: http://www.dpcalc.org/
• National Archives and Records Administration (NARA),
  http://www.archives.gov/ and
  http://www.archives.gov/preservation/internal/index.html
Fundraising
- Foundation Center, http://foundationcenter.org/
- Grantsmanship Center, http://www.1gci.com/
  - NEH policies, forms, and other information for organizations with a grant from NEH. http://www.neh.gov/grants/manage/organizations

Photography


CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

September 5 – Class #1

Introductions

Review syllabus, reading list and assignments

Overview and history of preservation activities, terminology, organizations associated with preservation and conservation of cultural property

Overview of the state of preservation programs in cultural institutions today

Overview of current preservation issues in libraries, archives, museums and heritage institutions

September 12 – Class #2

Class will not meet this week due to instructor travel. The class assignment is to view the two films below and to review the web sites listed. Each student is required to post to the entire class an original comment on each item watched and reviewed (for a total of six original comments) and is required to reply to three comments made by others.

View:

- Slow Fires: On the Preservation of the Human Record, American Film Foundation; produced and directed by Terry Sanders; written by Ben Maddow and Terry Sanders, 1987.
Read:
- American Library Association, Preservation and Reformatting Section (PARS), http://www.ala.org/alcts/mgrps/pars

September 19 – Class #3
Introduction to preservation of library and archival collection materials

Discussion of the range of materials and formats contained in research and heritage Collections and the challenges they pose

In class discussion of the challenges of stewardship and the “enemies” of collections

Reading:
- Ritzenthaler, Mary Lynn. Preserving Archives and Manuscripts. Chicago, SAA, 1993 and 2009. (Reading to be provided)
  Introduction and Chapters 1-5, Preserving Archives and Manuscripts
  - Archives Preservation: Definitions and Context
  - Implementing a Preservation Program
  - Nature of Archival Materials
  - Causes of Deterioration
  - Creating a Sympathetic Environment

September 26 – Class #4  WE WILL MEET AT BOBST LIBRARY FOR THIS SESSION

The broad range of topics and concerns that embody the concept of “preservation” in cultural institutions and how they are addressed through preservation surveys/assessments

Conduct a sample survey walk-through (of Bobst facility and collections)

Reading:

September 30th – Site Visit 10:00 am - 12:00 pm at The New York Public Library

This session will be at the central building on Fifth Ave and 42nd St. Please enter through the 40th St. entrance and we will meet at the guard’s desk inside that entrance.

- Tour of NYPL Preservation Division (10-11:00 am)
• NYPL Photography Division session (11:00 am - 12:00 pm) with Stephen Pinson, Miriam & Ira D. Wallach Assistant Director for Art, Prints and Photographs and the Robert B. Menschel Curator of Photography

October 3 – Class # 5

Topics:
• Environmental issues that affect collection longevity
• Institutional readiness for disaster preparedness and recovery

Readings:
• Conservation OnLine (CoOL) http://cool.conservation-us.org/
  • Disaster Preparedness and Response, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/disasters/
  • Mold, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/mold/
  • Pest Management, http://cool.conservation-us.org/bytopic/pest/
  • IPI related sites:
    • eClimate Notebook, https://www.eclimatenotebook.com/
    • Dew Point Calculator: http://www.dpcalc.org/

October 10 -- AMIA conference week – no class

October 17 – Class # 6

Class discussion and exercise on conservation treatment, collection care, holdings maintenance, storage, handling and education issues

Choosing appropriate housing options and materials

Readings:
• American Institute for Conservation (AIC), http://www.conservation-us.org/
October 24 – Class #7

Topics:
- Managing collections
- The role of preservation in the context of the larger organization
- Organizing for preservation
- The role of vendor services

Class exercise: Identifying preservation needs and options

Class exercise: Outline for a Preservation Plan

Reading:

October 31 - Disaster Plan Assignment Due

October 31—Class #8  NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING TIME AND PLACE BELOW

Still Photography Session One (Hands-on Session)
- History of photography
- Chemistry of photography
- Identifying processes and time periods

Class will be held 3:00 – 6:00 pm at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Photography Conservation Lab

Students should group inside the Education kiosk inside the main entrance, to the left of the central information desk. We will sign in and be escorted to the labs, as they are not open to the public.

November 7 – Class #9 NOTE CHANGE IN MEETING TIME AND PLACE

Still Photography Session Two
• Handling and storing photographs
• Cleaning and mending
• Hands-on exercises

3:00 – 6:00 pm, Metropolitan Museum of Art

This hands-on session will take place at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Photography Conservation Lab.

The class should group inside the Education kiosk inside the main entrance, to the left of the central information desk. We will sign in and be escorted to the labs, as they are not open to the public.

November 14 – Class #10

Conversation about the concept of cultural property and the future of stewardship in society

Reading:
cultural resources. Essays from the symposium held at the Library of Congress, Oct. 30-31, 2000, at
http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/preserve_protect/contents.html
- Additional articles to be assigned from major publications of current events and
trends

Viewing:
Art of the Steal, MAJ Production in association with 9.14 Pictures; produced by
Sheena M. Joyce; directed and photographed by Don Argott, 2009.

November 21 – Class #11

Preserving Archives and Manuscripts

Discussion: “More Product, Less Process”

Reading:
“More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing” by Mark
A. Greene and Dennis Meissner. (Available at
http://ahc.uwyo.edu/documents/faculty/greene/papers/Greene-Meissner.pdf.)

Viewing:
- Expert Series – Preserving the Charters of Freedom, (National Archives and
  Records Administration) http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gHIQr9GjVXU
- Saving the National Treasures, NOVA, 2005.

November 28 – Thanksgiving recess, no class

December 5 – Class #12

Topics:
- Preservation selection
- Fundraising

Reading:
- Foundation Center, http://foundationcenter.org/
- Grantsmanship Center, http://www.tgci.com/
  o Division of Preservation and Access,
    http://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation
  o NEH’s Application Review Process,
    http://www.neh.gov/grants/application-process
  o NEH policies, forms, and other information for organizations with a
    grant from NEH. http://www.neh.gov/grants/manage/organizations
  • New York State Library, Education Department, “Some Hints on Basic Grantwriting” http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/cp/workbook/hints.htm

December 12 — Class # 13

Preservation of Special Formats:
  Oversized and Mixed Media
  Photo Albums and Scrapbooks
  Posters and Flat Paper collections
  Other Heritage Materials

Readings:
CCAHA leaflets
NEDCC leaflets
See also sections of the syllabus related to General Preservation and Collection
Stewardship as well as Conservation and Collections Care

December 12 - Survey Assignment Due