

## Research Article

# Linking Institutional Missions to University and College Archives Programs: The Land-Grant Model

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**Abstract:** In order to compete effectively for institutional support of archival programs and services, archivists in the 1990s must develop innovative strategies for increasing their usefulness and visibility. One such strategy is to explore ways of linking their programs, collection policies, and activities to their institution's mission. Using land-grant college and university archives as a model, the author has collected data on collection policies, mission statements, outreach activities, and other information about the archives of these institutions and has presented this data in the context of the land-grant history and mission.

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COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVISTS face a particular dilemma in the never-ending quest for the kind of financial support that would enable them to fully utilize the valuable historical records they collect and preserve. Highly motivated to serve the faculty, students, and general public in their research, academic archivists are often hampered in their efforts by administrative indifference, not only to their fiscal needs but also to the important role they can play in graduate and undergraduate education. Reversing this tendency will require planning, creativity, and innovation.

In order to compete effectively for budgetary support, academic archivists of the 1990s must develop new strategies for bringing attention to their collections and programs. Recent trends in the profession indicate that increasing emphasis will be placed on the utilitarian role of archives. Addressing this issue, Bruce Dearstyne has advised that "archivists need to consider merging reference outreach and public programs into a new, aggressive, proactive public service concept that is integrated into the total archival program."<sup>1</sup>

Nowhere do archivists have a greater opportunity for implementing this advice than in college and universities. Situated in institutions dedicated to education and scholarly research, academic archivists enjoy a wide variety of opportunities for serving the public. If archival programs can be linked to the institutional mission itself, these opportunities may be enhanced and an academic archives can become an active participant in that mission. Records management programs, outreach activities, exhibits, and even the archives' own mission statement can be designed to reflect and promote the goals of the institution.

The idea of encouraging archivists to uti-

lize their institutional missions is not new. Nearly fifteen years ago, Nicholas Burckel noted the usefulness of university mission statements in developing archives collection policies.<sup>2</sup> More recently, the chairman of the College and University Section of the Society of American Archivists observed, "Documenting changes in institutional character and mission is perhaps the most challenging task of college and university archivists."<sup>3</sup>

Since 1949 a number of surveys and studies have identified and examined the archives of institutions of higher education in the United States. At least five of these have been conducted by the SAA Committee on College and University Archives, the cumulative results of which offer a useful profile of academic archives and their holdings, the professional level of their staffs, and the sophistication of their records management programs.<sup>4</sup> Statistics on college and university archives were also gathered in the archival census conducted in 1985 by SAA. In recent years, academic archives have been the subject of major research studies such as the Mellon-funded project directed by Helen Samuels at the

<sup>2</sup>Nicholas C. Burckel, "The Expanding Role of a College or University Archives," *Midwestern Archivist* 1 (1976): 48.

<sup>3</sup>*Academic Archivist* 3 (September 1985): 1.

<sup>4</sup>"Report of the Committee on College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 13 (1950): 63; Dwight H. Wilson, "Archives in Colleges and Universities: Some Comments on Data Collected by the Society's Committee on College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 13 (1950): 343-50; Philip P. Mason, "College and University Archives: 1962," *American Archivist* 26 (1963): 161-65; Robert M. Warner, "The Status of College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 31 (1968): 235-37; Ruth W. Helmuth, "Startling Facts Revealed by the C&U Survey," presented before the College and University Archives Committee at the 36th Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists, Columbus, Ohio, October 31-November 3, 1972 (unpublished), cited in *American Archivist* 45 (1982): 412 fn; Nicholas C. Burckel and J. Frank Cook, "A Profile of College and University Archives in the United States," *American Archivist* 45 (1982): 410-28.

<sup>1</sup>Bruce Dearstyne, "What is the Use of Archives? A Challenge for the Profession," *American Archivist* 50 (1987): 86.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which has proposed an innovative, functional approach to appraisal and documentation of university records.<sup>5</sup>

In order to determine whether academic archivists are utilizing their institutional missions, I instituted a survey of college and university archives in 1989, using eighty-four federal land-grant universities as the sample group (see table 1).<sup>6</sup> My project was not intended to re-explore well-covered ground by simply singling out one type of academic archives for study. Rather, it was an attempt to examine archives within the context of their institutional missions and historical traditions and to use this contextual framework to promote the role of the academic archives as a public-service oriented research facility.

Land-grant colleges and universities appeared to be an ideal choice as a test group for this survey. The "land-grant philosophy" has a long and honored history in higher education, advocating affordable, practical education for the working classes and public access to the fruits of technological research. Although the holdings of their archives may not appear at first to be significantly different than those of many

other academic institutions, the opportunity to link archival collection policies and outreach programs to the land-grant mission could attract greater administrative and fiscal support.

### The Land-Grant Mission

Mission statements in recent years have become a literary form in their own right. Like the formulation of a code of ethics, a mission statement presents an ideal, a standard, or a goal for which to reach. To the public the statement projects an image that inspires trust and approval based on common values; for the institution and the people who work there, it provides a focus of purpose and encourages loyalty. Most universities now publish a mission statement to focus attention on their unique history or on the educational programs for which they are best known.

The land-grant mission has undergone various interpretations and definitions through the years, yet it has retained a basic identity with agricultural research, engineering technology, affordable education for the masses, and public service. Chase Peterson, former president of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, offered a more pragmatic definition of the land-grant mission: Our mission has always been clear: teach specific employment skills to the population of our states for economic gain.<sup>7</sup> Philosophical considerations aside, land-grant colleges and universities are in fact defined by their designation as their respective states' recipients of federal funds deriving from land-grant legislation that also dictates their core mission, purpose, and programs.

The stages through which these institutions have developed vary from state to state,

<sup>5</sup>Helen W. Samuels, "Appraisal of Records of Higher Education," draft paper presented at the Bentley Historical Library Fellowship Program Symposium, Ann Arbor, Michigan, July 1988. Ms. Samuels has developed this into a book-length study entitled *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press and the Society of American Archivists, 1992).

<sup>6</sup>The list of federal land-grant colleges and universities used for the survey was compiled from the following sources: *Serving the World: the People and Ideas of America's State and Land-Grant Universities* (Washington, D.C.: National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, 1987); National Agricultural Library, "Land-Grant Libraries and Other Cooperating Institutions," September 1988; G. Lester Anderson, ed., *Land-Grant Universities and Their Continuing Challenge* (East Lansing: Michigan State University, 1976); *United States Code*, 1982 ed., Supplement 4: 318; *United States Code Annotated*, Title 7, 1988 Cumulative Pocket Part (St. Paul, Minn.: West Publishing Co., 1988), 4-12.

<sup>7</sup>*Proceedings of the 1989 Annual Meeting of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges, November 19-21, 1989* (Washington, D.C.: NASULGC, 1989), 12.

Table 1

Land-Grant Colleges and Universities (1989)	
Alabama A&M University	Michigan State University
Alcorn State University (Mississippi)	College of Micronesia
American Samoa Community College	University of Minnesota
Auburn University (Alabama)	Mississippi State University
University of Alaska-Fairbanks	University of Missouri-Columbia
University of Arizona	University of Missouri-Rolla
University of Arkansas-Fayetteville	Montana State University
University of Arkansas-Pine Bluff	University of Nebraska-Lincoln
University of California-Berkeley	University of Nevada-Reno
University of California-Davis	University of New Hampshire
University of California-Irvine	New Mexico State University
University of California-Los Angeles	North Carolina A&T University
University of California-Riverside	North Carolina State University
University of California-San Diego	North Dakota State University
University of California-Santa Barbara	Northern Marianas College
Clemson University (South Carolina)	Ohio State University
Colorado State University	Oklahoma State University
University of Connecticut	Oregon State University
Cornell University (New York)	Pennsylvania State University
Delaware State College	Prairie View A&M University (Texas)
University of Delaware	Purdue University (Indiana)
University of the District of Columbia	University of Puerto Rico
Florida A&M University	University of Rhode Island
University of Florida-Gainesville	Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey
Fort Valley State College (Georgia)	South Carolina State University
University of Georgia	South Dakota State University
University of Guam	Southern University (Louisiana)
University of Hawaii at Manoa	Tennessee State University
University of Idaho	University of Tennessee-Knoxville
University of Illinois-Chicago	Texas A&M University
University of Illinois-Urbana	Tuskegee University (Alabama)
Iowa State University	Utah State University
Kansas State University	University of Vermont
Kentucky State University	University of the Virgin Islands
University of Kentucky	Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
Langston University (Oklahoma)	Virginia State University
Lincoln University (Missouri)	Washington State University
Louisiana State University	West Virginia State University
University of Maine-Orono	University of Wisconsin-Madison
University of Maryland-College Park	University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
University of Maryland-Eastern Shore	University of Wyoming
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	

each responding to the economic and social factors of the larger society in which it operates. For archivists at land-grant colleges

or universities, a thorough knowledge of these historic stages is essential for making effective appraisal decisions and anticipat-



ing the needs of researchers using their collections.

### Land-Grant Institutions: A Brief History

More than eighty land-grant colleges and universities have been established in the United States and its territories. Enrollments range from 1,800 at Ft. Valley State College in Georgia to more than 57,000 at the University of Minnesota—Twin Cities. As designated federal land-grant institutions, they date from 1862 (Iowa State University and others) to 1984 (Northern Marianas College). Some, such as Rutgers University (1766) and the University of Georgia (1795), were operating long before they became land-grant institutions. Michigan State University, established in 1855 as the first agricultural college in the United States financed through state land-grant funds, set a precedent for the establishment of similar institutions that would ultimately receive endowments from the federal land-grant legislation. Lively debate has persisted over many years between several of these institutions wishing to claim the honor of being the “first” land-grant college.

Federal land-grant colleges were created by the Morrill Act of 1862, which granted “to the several states . . . thirty thousand acres for each senator and representative in Congress to which the States are respectively entitled,” on the condition that the income from the sale of these lands would be invested to provide a “perpetual fund” that would be used for the

endowment, support, and maintenance of at least one college . . . the leading object of which shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial

classes in the several pursuits and professions in life.<sup>8</sup>

Monies thus derived were to be spent only on maintenance and instruction; the states were required to select the location of the colleges and to provide funds for buildings and other facilities. The federal land-grant legislation has often been lauded for mandating federal support without federal control, a policy that continues to this day.

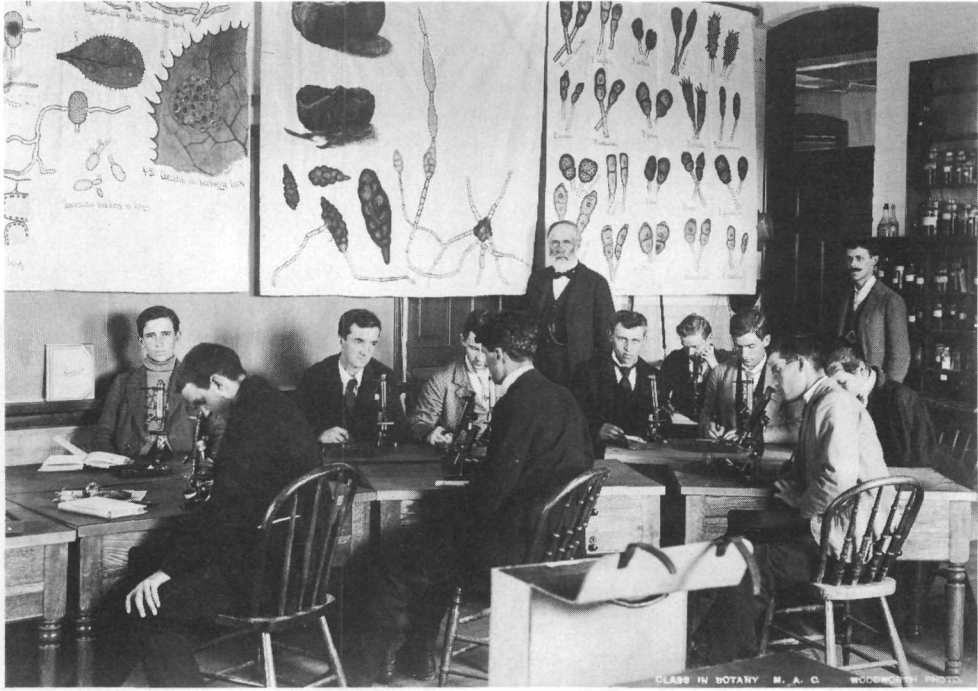
Response of the public and the state governments to this educational windfall was mixed. Controversies arose over the purpose and necessity of the “A&M” (agricultural and mechanical) colleges—many farmers doubted whether their sons needed to go to school to learn about agriculture—but by 1870 thirty-seven states had opted to establish land-grant colleges. Selection of land-grant sites, however, did not always receive popular support. Yale University was originally designated as the land-grant institution for Connecticut on the presumption that the scientific research being conducted there would ultimately benefit agriculture in some way. Farmers in that state successfully challenged this decision, and the legislature was forced to transfer the land-grant designation to Storrs Agricultural College (now the University of Connecticut), but not without having to compensate Yale, with interest.<sup>9</sup>

The Morrill Act, signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on 2 July 1862, was the culmination of many years of agitation on the grass-roots level to democratize education in America.<sup>10</sup> Before this,

<sup>8</sup>*Statutes at Large and Treaties of the United States of America*. 37th Congress, 1861-1862 (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1862), 503-05.

<sup>9</sup>Earle D. Ross, *Democracy's College: The Land-Grant Movement in the Formative State* (Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College Press, 1942), 80-81.

<sup>10</sup>One scholar has challenged this perception, claiming that the Morrill Act resulted not from public demand for access to higher education but from political lobbying by college presidents whose states had failed to provide adequate financial support for their



Dr. William J. Beal, professor of botany, presides over a laboratory session at Michigan Agricultural College, 1897. His teaching assistant, Burton Orange Longyear (at right), later headed the Colorado State University Department of Botany and Forestry and was also noted as an accomplished botanical artist. (All photos in this article are courtesy of the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections.)

United States universities had followed the European tradition, which offered—to those who could afford it—a classical education leading to a career in medicine, law, teaching, or the ministry. Advocates of the land-grant movement in America argued that in a democracy all citizens should be given access to higher education and that the government should help finance such a program because it would benefit all of society. Jonathan Baldwin Turner, one of the most vigorous leaders of the industrial and agricultural college movement, envisioned the creation of universities that would produce “thinking laborers” rather than “laborious

thinkers.”<sup>11</sup> These “thinking laborers” would in turn apply scientific research methods to agriculture and industry, resulting in material and technological advancement on a national scale. Turner’s prediction proved to be an understatement; the record of the contributions of land-grant colleges and universities to science and technology constitutes one of the greatest success stories in the history of higher education.

At their inception, land-grant colleges and universities were a unique phenomenon in higher education. Often acclaimed as an American innovation, they were in fact in-

institutions. *Penn State Special Collections Newsletter* 4 (Summer 1989): 4.

<sup>11</sup>Mary Turner Carriel, *The Life of Jonathan Baldwin Turner* (Jacksonville, Ill.: n.p. 1911), 89.

spired in part by technical education trends developing in Europe during the nineteenth century as a result of the Industrial Revolution.<sup>12</sup> Agricultural education and research, on the other hand, were promoted aggressively by local and state agricultural societies that grew rapidly in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.<sup>13</sup>

Although several state-supported universities had been established prior to the Civil War, the Morrill Act recognized the need for a federally-funded program that would ensure the permanent endowment of public colleges and universities, provide education for the industrial classes, and support and encourage the application of science to the practical occupations in modern society. At the same time, the Morrill Act addressed the need for wise use of America's abundant public land and for trained technical supervisors, of which there were few.

Bolstered by subsequent legislation—the Hatch Act (1887), the second Morrill Act (1890), the Adams Act (1906), the Nelson Amendment (1907), and the Smith-Lever Act (1914), land-grant colleges and universities continued to develop their mission of research, education for “the industrial classes,” and public service.<sup>14</sup> Whereas the

original Morrill Act established federal support without imposing federal control, the Hatch Act and the Smith-Lever Act established programs in which the federal government would take a more active role in the mandated mission of the land-grant colleges. In addition to benefitting financially from this legislation, agricultural experiment stations and cooperative extension service programs were linked directly with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which served in an advisory as well as a monitoring capacity.

Public service and outreach programs were an important part of the land-grant mission from the beginning. Short courses—offering practical training in a wide variety of farm-related subjects—and an annual “Farmers’ Week” were two examples of these activities. With the passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, public service outreach programs were formalized as cooperative extension programs designed to provide adult education, primarily in agriculture and home economics, and to initiate and support youth-oriented activities such as 4-H clubs. Although research has become the predominant focus of land-grant colleges and universities today, a strong commitment to public service and lifelong learning remains a vital and important part of their current programs.

Signed into law during the Civil War, the Morrill Act stipulated that military science be taught in the land-grant colleges. At the beginning of the war, Union troops had suffered greatly from the lack of trained officers and tactical experience; the president and Congress realized the value of incorporating military training in the curriculum of the new colleges to be established.<sup>15</sup> Today, land-grant colleges and

<sup>12</sup>David Madsen, “The Land-Grant University: Myth and Reality,” in *Land-Grant Universities and Their Continuing Challenge*, ed. G. Lester Anderson (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1976), 24-25.

<sup>13</sup>Alfred Charles True, *A History of Agricultural Education in the United States, 1785-1925*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929).

<sup>14</sup>*Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, 49th Congress, December 1885-March 1887, Vol. 24 (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1887), 63-64 (Hatch Act); *Statutes at Large*, 51st Congress, 1889-1890 (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O.), 417-19 (Second Morrill Act); *Statutes at Large*, December 1905-March 1907, Vol. 34, Part I (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1907), 63-64 (Adams Act). 1280-1282 (Nelson Act); *Statutes at Large*, March 1913-March 1914, Vol. 38, Part I (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1915): 372-74 (Smith-Lever Bill). For a summary of land-grant legislation, see Alan M. Fusonic and Marilyn Jacobs, comps., *The Land-Grant Colleges: A Selective Historical Bib-*

*liography and Legislative Chronology* (Beltsville, Md.: Historical Program, National Agricultural Library, 1983).

<sup>15</sup>Edward Danforth Eddy, *Colleges for Our Land*



4-H Poultry Club Members. French Landing, Michigan, ca. 1926. Cooperative Extension Service programs at land-grant colleges encouraged the formation of “boys and girls clubs,” later named 4-H clubs. Through club activities, children learned a variety of skills that prepared them not only for farm work but for community leadership roles as well.

universities continue to train military officers and have been credited with playing a major role in war preparedness. More than half of the U.S. Army officers called to service in the early days of World War II had been trained in ROTC programs at the land-grant institutions.<sup>16</sup>

Two groups in American society received particular encouragement and benefit from the federal land-grant legislation: blacks and women. The “Second Morrill Act,” signed in 1890, stipulated that land-grant funds could not be used for the maintenance and support of any college “where

a distinction of race or color is made in the admission of students.”<sup>17</sup> A state could be in compliance with the law, however, if separate colleges were established and maintained for white and African-American and if the funds were equitably divided. As a result of the 1890 legislation, thirteen agricultural and mechanical colleges for blacks were established or further developed by the turn of the century. While the funding allocated to these colleges was never fully realized, the schools provided many blacks access to college-level education and research opportunities that would not otherwise have been available to them.

*and Time: The Land-Grant Idea in American Education* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 41.

<sup>16</sup>Eddy, *Colleges for Our Land and Time*, 224.

<sup>17</sup>*Statutes at Large*, 51st Congress, 1889-1890 (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1890), 418.



Extension agent with group of farm children, 1920s. A young 4-H poultry club member receives a silver trophy for her hen.

Higher education for women was still relatively new in the 1860s, with Oberlin College having begun the movement in 1837 by allowing women to enroll in either a B.A. program or a "Young Ladies Course."<sup>18</sup> The federal land-grant legislation neither permitted nor prohibited women from enrolling as students in the land-grant colleges, but it clearly opened new doors for females in education. Some of the land-grant colleges, like Iowa Agricultural College, were coeducational from the start; others waited until special courses could be set up for female students. Texas A&M did not begin to admit women generally until

the 1960s, when the university was forced to do so by the courts.<sup>19</sup>

Significant federal support of home economics programs at land-grant colleges dates from the 1914 Smith-Lever Act, which established federal cooperative extension programs and provided for "instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons attending or resident in said colleges."<sup>20</sup> Like other curricula set up in land-grant colleges, the women's courses emphasized scientific research and public service but applied these activities to "women's" concerns such as cooking, sewing, sanitation, home man-

<sup>18</sup>Robert Samuel Fletcher, *A History of Oberlin College From Its Foundation Through the Civil War*, Vol. 2 (Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College, 1943), 715, 722.

<sup>19</sup>Henry C. Dethloff, *A Centennial History of Texas A&M University, 1876-1976* (College Station, Tex.: Texas A&M Press, 1975), 568-70.

<sup>20</sup>*Statutes at Large*, March 1913-March 1914, Vol. 38, Part I (Washington, D.C.: G.P.O., 1915), 373.



agement, textiles, and child education. Although the land-grant colleges and universities eventually accepted women in all of their programs, the home economics curriculum was important because it offered new opportunities for women in teaching and scientific research. Moreover, it enabled them to carry this knowledge to other women in rural areas through cooperative extension programs, thus improving their lives as well. Gradually women were allowed to enroll in such traditionally male programs as engineering, veterinary medicine, and landscape design.

Thus the history of educational curricula at land-grant colleges and universities—and the records that document this history—center on a continued emphasis on those subjects identified with the land-grant mission: agricultural science, engineering, cooperative extension programs, and military science. Yet the land-grant institutions have a continual record of responding to social trends and the needs of the times. Agricultural research and extension, along with strong engineering and home economics, served as the central core of most land-grant college curricula, but this traditional base has been broadened over the years to include a variety of liberal arts courses and degree programs developed to meet public demand for training in new professional fields. The range and scope of these newer programs offered by land-grant colleges and universities, in fact, sometimes threaten to eclipse the significance of the basic programs mandated by the land-grant legislation.

### **Current Relevance of the Land-Grant Mission**

How relevant is the land-grant philosophy and mission today? This question is frequently raised in view of the ubiquitous goal of “teaching, research, and public service” now claimed by virtually every public university.

By the time the centennial of the Morrill Act was celebrated in 1962, land-grant universities bore little resemblance to their humble beginnings. Some were well on their way to becoming mega-universities, with “extension” programs operating on every continent. Distinctions between their programs and those of other universities faded, and both private and publicly funded institutions around the country offered many of the programs pioneered by the land-grant colleges.

Further evidence of this trend was seen in 1963 when the National Association of State Universities, the State Universities Association, and the Association of Land-Grant Colleges merged to become the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges and Universities. Yet the appellation “cow college” persists, and there are strong indications that the importance of the land-grant identity may even be growing as agricultural economics and research professionals seek answers to the problems of feeding expanding populations in a global society.

Do land-grant colleges and universities constitute a unique “universe” in higher education? And if they do, how can their archivists document the history of this universe and participate in its mission? One of the purposes of the study was to discover answers to these questions.

### **Archival Programs and the Land-Grant Mission: Survey Findings**

The survey of land-grant college and university archives provided an interesting profile of academic archives. (See table 2 at the end of the article for a summary of the responses.) Sixty-two institutions responded to the survey, nearly 90 percent of which have an archives, with the earliest having been established in 1928, and the most recent in 1986. In the comprehensive survey conducted in 1966 by the College and University Section of the Society of



Table 2

**Land-Grant College and University Archives Survey, 1989  
Summary of Data**

**Scope of survey:**

Institutions in survey	84
Institutions responding	62 (74%)
Responding institutions with archives	55 (89%)

## Faculty orientation

programs	21 (38%)
Archives workshops	23 (42%)
Outreach programs	34 (62%)

**Date of establishment of archives:**

Earliest	1928
Latest	1986

**Budget:**

Less than \$15,000	13 (24%)
\$15,000–29,999	5 (9%)
\$30,000–49,999	5 (9%)
\$50,000–99,999	12 (22%)
More than \$100,000	11 (20%)
Included in overall library budget	6 (11%)
No data given	3 (5%)

**Archives combined with other collections:**

Manuscript collections	51 (93%)
Rare books	33 (60%)
Museum/historical artifacts	21 (38%)
Other collections	24 (44%)

**Importance placed by the college or university on its identity as a land-grant institution (opinion of the archivist):**

Great importance	24 (44%)
Moderate importance	16 (29%)
Little importance	11 (20%)
No opinion	4 (7%)

**Archives with records management programs:**

29 (53%)

**Administrative placement of archives:**

Independent unit	5 (9%)
Part of library operation	46 (84%)
Part of museum operation	1 (2%)
Other	3 (5%)

**Archives collecting land-grant-related records:**

Agriculture	31 (56%)
Engineering	27 (49%)
Home economics	23 (42%)
Cooperative extension	30 (55%)
Agricultural experiment stations	28 (51%)
Engineering experiment stations	15 (27%)
Continuing education	24 (44%)
None of the above	10 (18%)
Data unavailable	4 (7%)

**Physical location of archives**

Separate building	3 (5%)
Library	47 (85%)
Other	5 (9%)

**Archives with:**

Institutional mission statements	48 (87%)
Archives mission statements	39 (71%)
Collection policies	36 (65%)

**Public service—archives sponsoring/participating in:**

Exhibits and displays	46 (84%)
Student orientation programs	33 (60%)

**Bulletins of the agricultural experiment stations and the cooperative extension service published by their institutions:**

Kept in archives	35 (64%)
Kept elsewhere on campus	12 (22%)
No information available	8 (15%)

**Table 2 (continued)**

**In answer to the question "What subject areas are given emphasis in your archives collection program?" the following topics were listed:**

University history	Engineering
Regional, state, local history	Architecture
History of agriculture	Management
History of science and technology	Humanities and social sciences
Civil War	Economics
Lincoln and American expansion	Linguistics
Music	Lumbering
Theater	Automobile history
Textile history	Afro-Americans
Twentieth-century political history	Education
Vietnam War	Science associations
Business	Consumer management
Labor	Black education
Politics	Pioneer papers
Civic affairs	City records
Ethnicity	Marine and environmental records
Railroads	Aerospace history
Regional and area planning	Cultural history
Land use	Veterinary history
Health planning	Wildlife and outdoor recreation
Ornithology	

**Asked what land grant related records were collected by the archives other than agriculture, engineering, home economics, cooperative extension, etc., respondents listed the following:**

Land-Grant College and University Association	University president records
Agricultural technology	Social programs, conferences, workshops
Marketing cooperatives	Military science, ROTC
University serials	Farming and ranching
Labor union and worker records	Forestry
Agricultural Cooperatives	Viticulture, botany, pomology, enology
International development of land-grant institutions	Pesticide research
Agriculture-related business records	Sea Grant publications

**Location of agricultural experiment station and cooperative extension service bulletins, other than university archives:**

College of Agriculture Library	Main Library - Agriculture Library
Cooperative Extension Office	Main Library -
Main Library -	Home Economics Library
Government Documents/Division	Main Library - Science Library
Main Library - general stacks	

Table 2 (continued)

**Courses and programs on campus encouraging or requiring use of the archives:**

Local history	Women's studies
State history	Library and information science
Public history	Architecture
Art history	Engineering
Agricultural history	Speech communication
Architectural history	Labor economics
History seminar	Land use
Historical methods	Landscape architecture
Historical editing	Physical education
History of science and technology	Design
Archives management	Archival photography
Records management	Freshman studies
Journalism	Junior seminar
Fashion design	Literary research
English courses	

American Archivists, only 48 percent of the 1,156 colleges and universities responding had archives.<sup>21</sup>

Asked what importance their institutions placed on their land-grant identity, more than 70 percent of the archivists reported great or moderate importance. Responses to this question revealed that it is not always easy to determine how important the land-grant identity is to these institutions. As one archivist explained,

It all depends on whom you talk to at this university. Certain factions heavily promote the identity of this university as the state's land-grant institution, while others go out of their way to play it down. . . . There is the inevitable struggle between promoting the historical component and striving to be a comprehensive, doctoral-granting university.<sup>22</sup>

**Documenting land-grant activities.** The importance of the land-grant identity apparently influences the kind of records being collected. Those archives with the largest collections of records on agriculture, engineering, and cooperative extension also were among those reporting that their institutions placed "great importance" on their land-grant history. However, only about half the respondents said they actively collect some records on agriculture, engineering, home economics, and continuing education, even though 73 percent thought the land-grant identity had great or moderate importance. Eighteen percent reported that they collected *none* of the land-grant related categories of records listed.

Several archives reported collecting important non-institutional records related to the land-grant mission. The University of Illinois Archives, for example, is the official repository for the records of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections houses the Land-Grant Research Center

<sup>21</sup>Robert M. Warner, "The Status of College and University Archives," *American Archivist* 31 (July 1968): 236.

<sup>22</sup>John B. Straw, University Archivist, Virginia Tech. Letter to author, 30 May 1989.

Collection. Two archives reported collecting records of market cooperatives, and another has a collection of materials on the international development of land-grant institutions.

Collecting land-grant related records is important but appraising these records, which are sometimes voluminous, can be challenging. Dennis Taylor, Clemson University Archivist, conducted a survey of land-grant college and university archives in 1987 in order to find if similar repositories preserved large volumes of old financial records relating to the administration of the federal land-grant funds.<sup>23</sup> Taylor's survey led to useful discussion on the feasibility of seeking advice from the National Archives on creating a uniform collection policy for these records. Another archivist has proposed that land-grant college and university archivists help one another by sharing information on collecting agricultural experiment station and cooperative extension bulletins that are produced in great numbers by all of these institutions.

**Mission statements and collecting policies.** Institutional mission statements do not appear to have direct influence on the policy documents created by their archives. Eighty-seven percent reported that their institutions have published mission statements, and 71 percent have mission statements for their archives. Many of the participating archives sent copies of these documents along with their survey questionnaire. An analysis of these showed that while the majority of university mission statements collected in the survey emphasize their land-grant status, the archives' own mission statements and collection policies seldom allude to the historical land-grant mission of their university or college. There were exceptions, however, as indicated by the following extracts from their published brochures:

**Clemson University:** "[The Archives] mission is to collect and preserve those sources of information that document the activities of the institution, and to help Clemson University fulfill its mission as a land-grant institution of higher learning."<sup>24</sup>

**Prairie View A&M University:** "The Special Collections/University Archives department serves [as] a repository for the preservation of school records, historical documents, artifacts, and memorabilia of permanent value relating to the mission of the college as a land-grant institution."<sup>25</sup>

**North Carolina State University:** "The North Carolina State University Archives serves as the administrative memory of North Carolina's first land-grant institution."<sup>26</sup>

The survey responses revealed that collection policies tend to be broadly defined; they follow standard policy and language originating from the archives and records management professions. Incorporating institutional goals into the language of the archives' own policies may unify the goals of the archives with those of the institution. Such a policy would be clearly compatible with *Guidelines for College and University Archives* published by the Society of American Archivists in 1979, which states:

College and university archives share the following core mission: . . . To promote knowledge and understanding of the origins, aims, programs, and goals of the institution, and of the development of these aims, goals, and programs.<sup>27</sup>

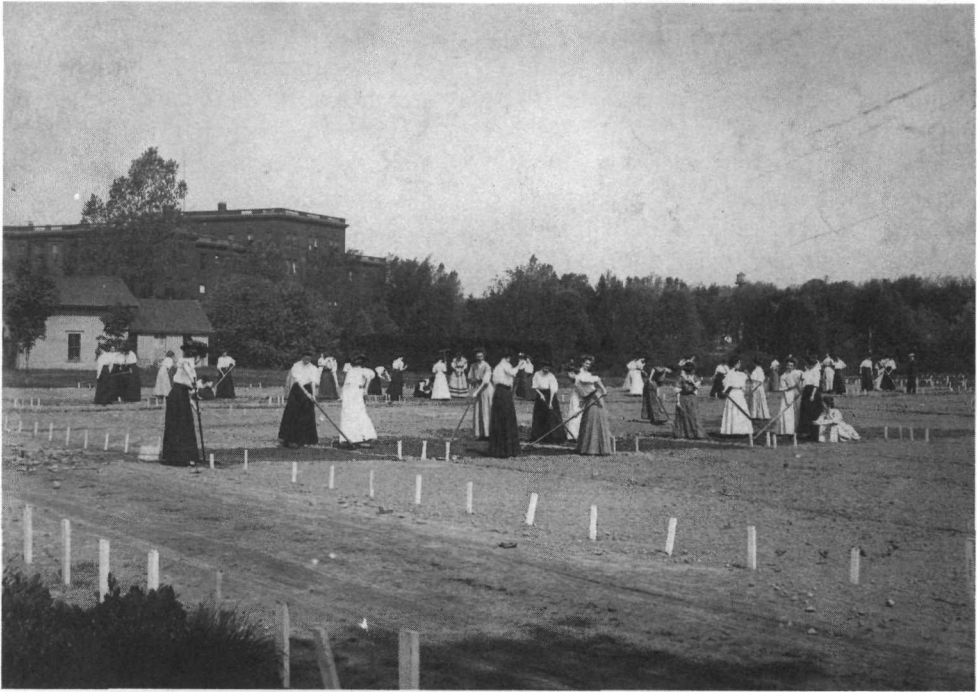
<sup>24</sup>*University Archives*, brochure published by Special Collections, University Libraries, Clemson University. n.d.

<sup>25</sup>"Special Collections/University Archives," informational sheet. University Library, Prairie View A&M University. n.d.

<sup>26</sup>*University Archives*, brochure published by North Carolina State University Archives. n.d.

<sup>27</sup>Minutes of the SAA Council meeting, 28 September 1979, *American Archivist* 43 (Spring 1980): 263.

<sup>23</sup>Unpublished survey by Dennis Taylor, University Archivist, Clemson University, 1989.



Women students working in field, ca. 1905. In the early years of many land-grant colleges, physical labor was required of all students as part of their educational program. Here coeds prepare vegetable gardens for spring planting; each home economics junior and senior was assigned a 12' x 30' plot to cultivate.

Archivists at these institutions have found ways of capitalizing on the land-grant heritage. In 1983 Auburn University Archives instituted the Alabama Agriculture and Rural Life Project, a statewide records survey to identify and collect agricultural records and personal papers. Funded jointly by Auburn University and the National Endowment for the Humanities, this project served to increase the holdings of the archives and to make a significant contribution to state and local history resources. The final product included a promotional brochure and an excellent published guide—their first—to the agricultural collections in the Auburn University Archives.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>28</sup>Jeff Jakeman, comp., *Agriculture and Rural Life in Alabama: A Guide to the Records and Papers in*

**Archival outreach as extension.** One of the most direct ways an archives can utilize the land-grant mission is to actually participate in the extension component of that mission by offering workshops, producing exhibits, and working closely with the faculty to support primary-source research on the undergraduate as well as graduate level.

Workshops in genealogy, oral history, preserving family records, and using archival sources for research can provide an important public service.<sup>29</sup> They also en-

*the Auburn University Archives* (Auburn University, Ala.: Department of Archives and Records Management, and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, 1985).

<sup>29</sup>See Joel Wurl, "Methodology as Outreach: A Public-Mini Course on Historical Family Records," *American Archivist* 49 (Spring 1986): 184-86.

courage the preservation of historical records and help call attention to the university archives collections. Other interested departments on campus are often willing to cosponsor such workshops and share the cost. One of the most valuable resources available to archivists at land-grant universities is the Cooperative Extension Service, which has decades of experience in adult education and access to large numbers of individuals and organizations around the state. A workshop jointly sponsored by this office is almost a guaranteed success. Some of the survey respondents have discovered that county extension agents can be enthusiastic supporters of university archives and are sometimes instrumental in attracting donations of important collections of family papers.

Exhibits featuring some aspect of the history of the university as a land-grant institution can attract the attention and interest of the university administration as well as the public. A mobile exhibit can be even more effective. One of the more interesting agricultural exhibits discovered through the land-grant survey project was not planned by an archives but by a university photographer. Stan Sherer, photographer at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, produced a successful exhibit, oral history, and publication project titled "Founding Farms: Five Massachusetts Family Farms, 1638-Present."<sup>30</sup> The traveling exhibition, which featured farms that have remained in the same family since their founding, was shown in museums and galleries around the state over a two-year period. At Michigan State University, photographic exhibits prepared for the annual Michigan Festival are loaned out during the year to other departments for display in their buildings.

Academic archivists have always

worked closely with faculty whose courses require primary-source research. Survey participants were asked to provide information about such courses being offered. At one university, a professor of state history published a "course pack" for his students that lists more than one hundred topics for research and suggests specific collections in the university archives related to each topic. Each term the course is offered, the class is invited to visit the archives for an orientation on the use of archival materials before beginning their research projects.

Physical location and administrative placement can sometimes limit or enhance the success of a university archives program. Most of the archives participating in the survey are located in the university library and are combined with other collections such as rare books, special collections, or manuscripts. Only five of the fifty-five responding are operating as an independent unit. While it can be argued that one or the other situation is more advantageous for a university archives, the most important factor in the success of any archival program is the archivist's own enthusiasm, initiative and innovation in finding ways to better serve the public and the institution.

## Summary

The land-grant college and university archives project provided a forum for archivists at these institutions to discuss mutual problems and concerns and to share ideas about ways to serve the public better. It drew attention to institutional missions and encouraged archivists at land-grant universities to look more closely at their collection policies in light of their institution's mission. The survey results, which were shared with participants, provided an overview of archival programs and activities at land-grant institutions that can serve as the basis to re-evaluate the importance and

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<sup>30</sup>Stan Sherer and Michael E. C. Gery, *Founding Farms: Five Massachusetts Family Farms, 1638-Present* (Amherst, Mass.: Quality Printing Co., [1991]).



possible uses of our archival collections, examine the scope of our services to the university and the public, and gain a better

understanding of why archivists must seek an answer to Bruce Dearstyne's question, "What is the use of an archives?"



## P U B L I C A T I O N

### **Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities**

by Helen W. Samuels

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