Beyond Efficiency: An Impact Assessment of the UC Guidelines for Efficient Processing

Kate Dundon & Courtney Dean

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Background

Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing
in the University of California Libraries

Version 3.2

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* Revised in 2020

Research Team

Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez
Digital Archivist
UC Irvine

Audra Eagle Yun
Head of Special Collections &
Archives and University Archivist
UC Irvine

Courtney Dean
Associate Director, Acquisitions and
Collections Control in Special
Collections, Yale *(formerly UCLA)*

Laurel McPhee
Supervisory Archivist
UC San Diego

Kate Dundon
Supervisory Archivist
UC Santa Cruz

Shira Peltzman
Associate Director, Preservation
Digital Strategy, Yale
(formerly UCLA)

Research Questions

Which elements of the Guidelines were successfully adopted?

Did the Guidelines help us reduce our backlog?

If not, what are the barriers to implementing efficient processing and collection management?

Research Methodology

- Quantitative survey (numbers)
- Qualitative focus groups (attitudes and perspectives)

Key Findings: what did we adopt?

Core principle #1: Aim to provide access to all holdings

Core principle #2: Look for the "golden minimum" (with some exceptions)

Key Findings: what did we NOT adopt?

Core principle #5: Measure and compare processing rates to ensure processing is carried out efficiently

Key Findings: did the Guidelines help UC reduce the backlog?

Year	Total collection footprint	Estimated unprocessed backlog	Percentage of footprint that is unprocessed
2009-2010	247,346 linear feet	71,605 linear feet	29%
2021-2022	484,228 linear feet 81.4 TB	54,713 linear feet 13.7 TB	11% of physical 17% of digital

(Yes!)

Key Findings: barriers to implementing efficient processing and collection management

1. 25% reduction in employees responsible for processing
2. Culture that favors acquisitions over access
3. Capacity gap for developing and sustaining collection management infrastructure

Implications: University of California Libraries

- Not all of the elements of the Guidelines were adopted statewide
- Data collection, value scores, and appraisal are areas of opportunity
- Accessioning backlogs are a critical issue

Implications: Profession-wide

Efficient processing alone cannot solve the backlog problem 🖐🎤

Sharing results

- Internal UC conversations
- Article in *Journal of Western Archives* (forthcoming)
- Presentations

Thank you!

Questions? Contact us at:

Kate Dundon   dundon@ucsc.edu
Courtney Dean   courtney.dean@yale.edu