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# Usability Testing and Metadata Improvement: Meeting User Needs and Expectations in ArchivesSpace

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# Usability Testing and Metadata Improvement

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Meeting User Needs and Expectations in  
ArchivesSpace

Annie Benefiel  
Grand Valley State University

## Grand Valley State

- Comprehensive University (Masters Large)
- 25,000 students
- 5 Library locations
- 2 Campuses, Allendale & Grand Rapids

## Special Collections & University Archives

- "Off the beaten path" location
- Space shared with study lounge
- 3 full-time faculty librarians
- Student staff ~20 hrs/week



## Adopting the Shared Customer Service Philosophy

- Approachable
- Peer-to-peer support
- Scaffold student experience
- Build expertise
- Go the extra mile
- Be friendly, quick, efficient



# Collections

500+ collections

3700 linear feet

32,000 rare books

# ArchivesSpace

Implemented 2014

LYRASIS hosted

PUI upgrade August 2017

Abraham Lincoln, Civil War & Slavery



20th Century Wars & Veterans



Politics & Government



Michigan & Regional History



Young Lords in Lincoln Park



Interviews & Oral Histories



Art & Artists



Authors & Literature

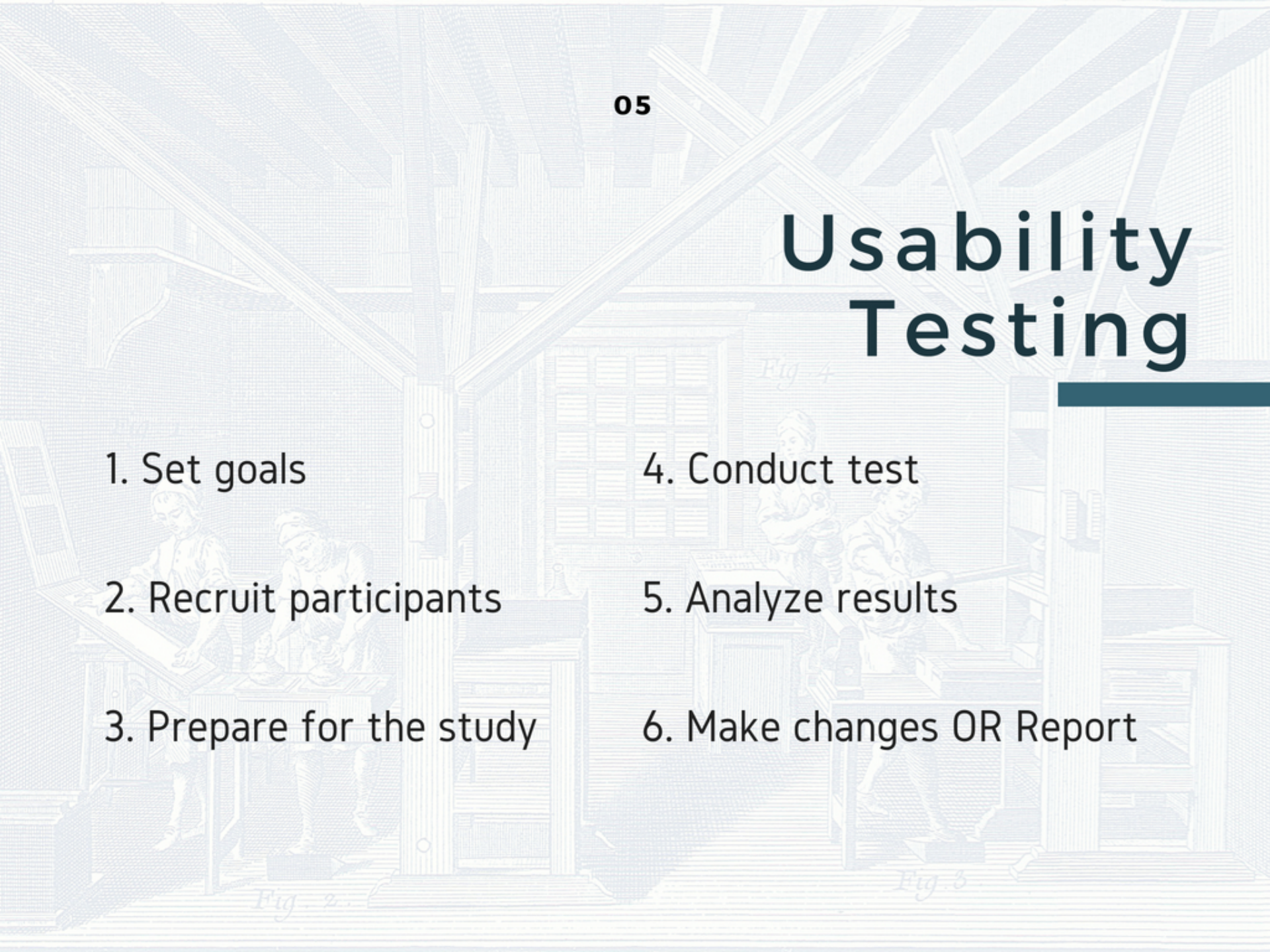


Incunabula, Books & Printing



# Usability Testing

1. Set goals
2. Recruit participants
3. Prepare for the study
4. Conduct test
5. Analyze results
6. Make changes OR Report



# Set goals

## Can GVSU Students use ArchivesSpace to:

- Identify relevant primary source materials?
- Determine how to access the materials?
- Locate related digital collections?



# Recruit participants

## Challenge

Special Collections & University Archives gets little foot traffic

Many undergrads have little experience finding and using archives

No budget for incentives to participate

## Solution

Library User Experience (UX) student employees

More experienced with library searching and finding resources

Incorporated the test into their library training



# Prepare for the study

## Scenario 1

Find multiple versions of an author's work.

### Wolf (circa. 1973)—Unproduced



**Scope and Contents** Writings by Jim Harrison document the process of his writing from initial ideas and concept development through publication. Early notes include Harrison's thoughts on writing and becoming a writer. The materials may contain handwritten and typescript drafts, revisions, pre-published and published versions.

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / Jim Harrison papers / Writings by Jim Harrison / Screenplays](#)

### Wolf (1990-1993) cont.



**Scope and Contents** Writings by Jim Harrison document the process of his writing from initial ideas and concept development through publication. Early notes include Harrison's thoughts on writing and becoming a writer. The materials may contain handwritten and typescript drafts, revisions, pre-published and published versions.

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / Jim Harrison papers / Writings by Jim Harrison / Screenplays](#)

### Wolf: novel (1970-1971)



**Scope and Contents** Writings by Jim Harrison document the process of his writing from initial ideas and concept development through publication. Early notes include Harrison's thoughts on writing and becoming a writer. The materials may contain handwritten and typescript drafts, revisions, pre-published and published versions.

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / Jim Harrison papers / Writings by Jim Harrison / Fiction](#)

# Prepare for the study


## Scenario 2

Find physical and digital versions of World War II photographs.


Creator is exactly "Ochs, James W."

1 of 2 [Next Page](#)


Sort by: [Title](#) [Creator](#)




**Equipment inspection**  
Equipment inspection at the 26th Infantry Division on US base, 1944.



**Signal Officer Clapper speaking to troops at US base**  
26th Infantry Division Signal




**Military marching band passes the 104th Infantry headquarters sign**  
Military marching band of the 26th Infantry Division passes 104th Infantry headquarters



**Soldiers reading headlines of allies invasion**  
Soldiers of the 26th Infantry Division crouched around an issue of the Columbia Record

### James W. Ochs World War II collection

 **Collection** Identifier: RHC-55

**Collection Description** Collection includes a photo album of images taken by Ochs, 16 photos taken by the Army Signal Corps of the 26th Infantry Division, and a scrapbook of documents, articles, letters, brochures and other printed materials, currency and artifacts collected by Ochs. Photographs in the album document his tour of duty in France with the 26th Division, friends he acquired in France, and his leisure time activities. The collection also included is a copy of the video interview conducted for the Veterans...

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / James W. Ochs World War II collection](#)



# Prepare for the study

## Scenario 3

Find primary resources relating to women at Grand Valley.

Search all record types where  
keyword(s): **women's activism**

Showing Results: 1 - 100 of 103

1 2 Relevance ▼ Sort

**Women's Center. CVPT Magazine**  
Series – Box: 80 Identifier: GV028-41

**Overview** In October 2010, the Grand Valley State University's Women's Center received a three-year VAWA grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women. Through that grant the Women's center produced CVPT Magazine. The magazine contains information about the issues of sexual assault and domestic violence, as well as resources and services to support victims and survivors. It also includes information and support about healthy relationships and ways that men can participate in...

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / Women's Center. CVPT Magazine](#)

**Women's Commission files**  
Series – Box: 57 Identifier: GV183

**Abstract** The Women's Commission was created with the purpose to insure an environment that supports women at Grand Valley by identifying issues of concern to women, coordinate efforts to improve the campus for women, target specific issues to be addressed, and monitor their progress. They reported to the President and Board of Control. Collection contains the mission statement, reports, and other supplementary materials.

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / Women's Commission files](#)

**HerStory lectures**  
Series Identifier: GV044-03

**Abstract** In the late 1990s, faculty and staff members and students served on a task force to research development of a women's center at the request of faculty, staff and students. The Women's Center was established in 2001 to create meaningful learning experience about women and gender and to advocate for gender justice through the education, engagement, and empowerment of women students and the greater GVSU community. The Center partners with students, faculty, and staff to offer comprehensive and...

**Found in:** [Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives / HerStory lectures](#)

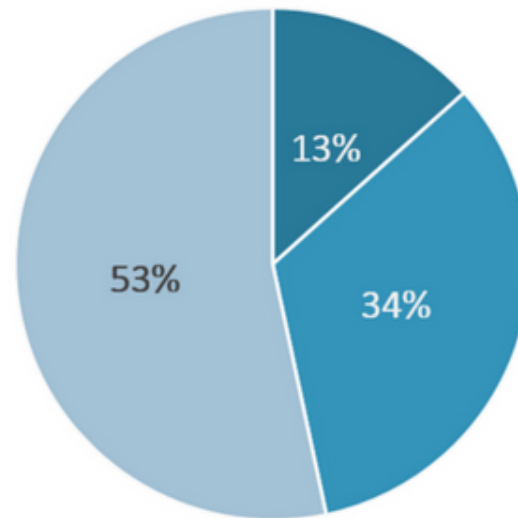
# Conduct the test

## Guided Questionnaire

- How successful were you?
- Copy & paste URLs to your findings.
- How would you gain access to materials identified in your search?
- What did you find confusing?
- What terminology did you find confusing?

# Analyze the results

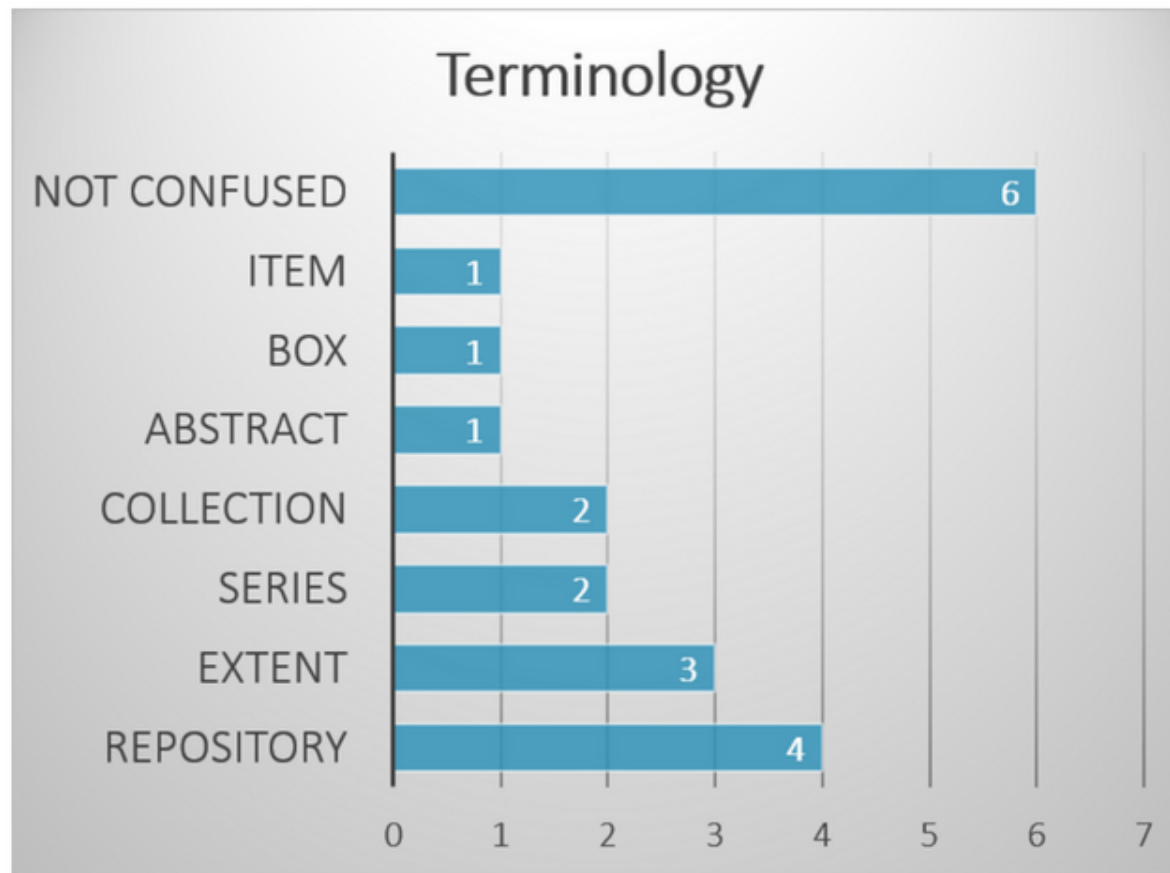
Search Success



■ Not successful ■ Moderately successful ■ Very successful

53%	Very Successful	=	Relevant links + High confidence
34%	Moderately Successful	=	Relevant links + Lower confidence
13%	Not Successful	=	Irrelevant Links

# Analyze the results



# Analyze the results

## Likes

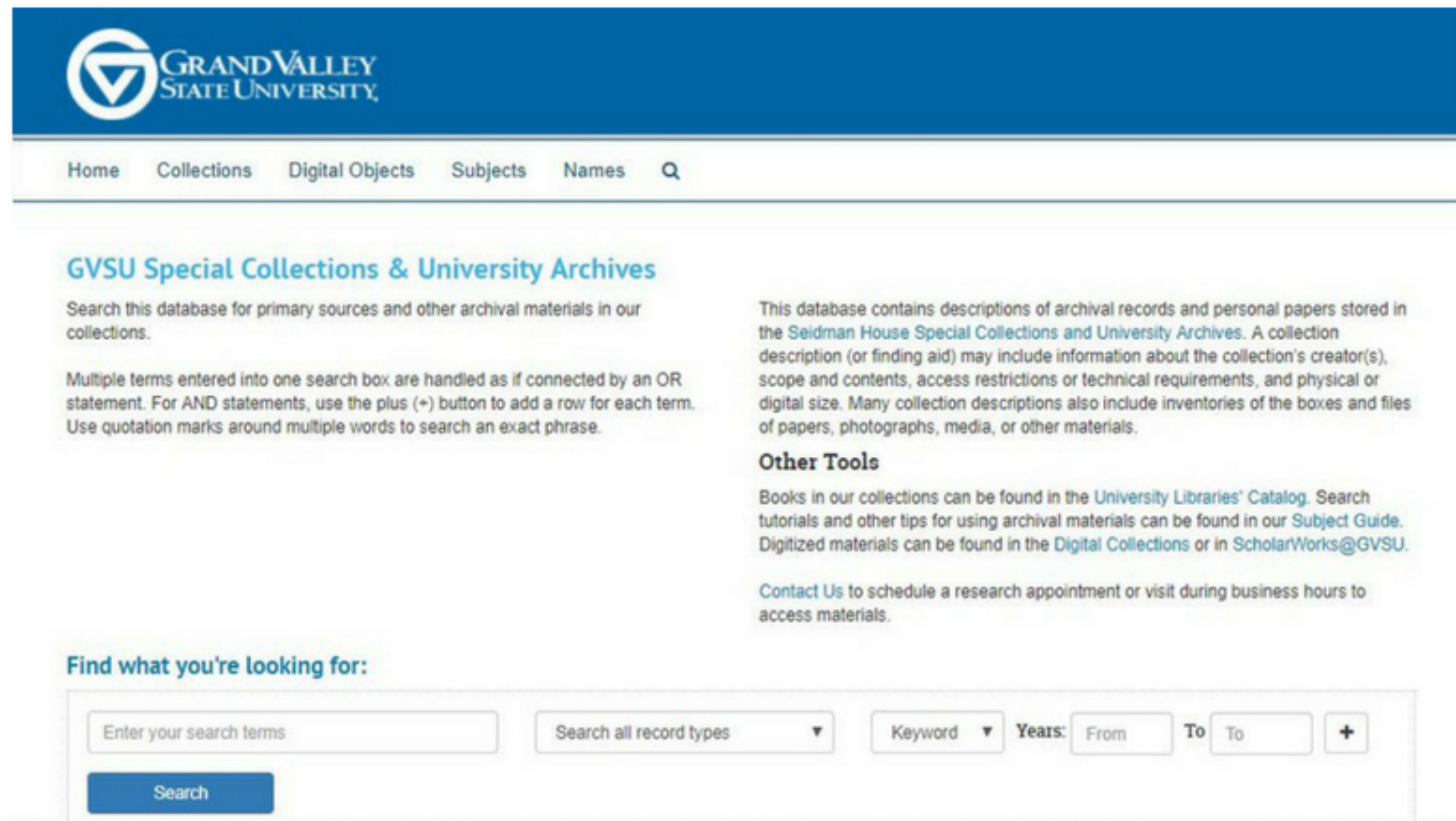
- Prominent citation button
- Ability to refine searches
- Relevant collections contain many possible sources of information

## Dislikes

- Confusing to navigate
- Access to materials unclear
- Keyword searches don't always get results

# Make changes

- Search Instructions
- Description of database contents
- Links to other tools



**GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY**

Home Collections Digital Objects Subjects Names Q

## GVSU Special Collections & University Archives

Search this database for primary sources and other archival materials in our collections.

Multiple terms entered into one search box are handled as if connected by an OR statement. For AND statements, use the plus (+) button to add a row for each term. Use quotation marks around multiple words to search an exact phrase.

This database contains descriptions of archival records and personal papers stored in the [Seidman House Special Collections and University Archives](#). A collection description (or finding aid) may include information about the collection's creator(s), scope and contents, access restrictions or technical requirements, and physical or digital size. Many collection descriptions also include inventories of the boxes and files of papers, photographs, media, or other materials.

### Other Tools

Books in our collections can be found in the [University Libraries' Catalog](#). Search tutorials and other tips for using archival materials can be found in our [Subject Guide](#). Digitized materials can be found in the [Digital Collections](#) or in [ScholarWorks@GVSU](#).

[Contact Us](#) to schedule a research appointment or visit during business hours to access materials.

Find what you're looking for:

Enter your search terms  Search all record types  Keyword  Years: From  To



# Make changes


Conditions Governing

Access note

More explicit information

Clearer label

## 461st Bomb Group (H) collection

 **Collection** Identifier: RHC-133

Grand Valley State University Special Collections and University Archives | 461st Bomb Group (H) collection

Collection Overview

Collection Organization

Container Inventory

This collection contains a small amount of material collected by attendees at a 461st Bomb Group reunion. It includes reunion agendas, a 461st Bomb Group badge, and two essays written about the 461st Bomb Group.

### Dates

circa 1999-2005

### Access to the Materials

Collection is open for research use. Materials may be accessed by request at Special Collections and University Archives in Seidman House. Materials do not circulate.

### Publication Rights

The collection is the physical property of Grand Valley State University, but all literary rights are retained by the original creators of materials, their estates, heirs, or third parties. It is the responsibility of the researcher to secure appropriate permissions for publication beyond the bounds of fair use.

### Extent

0.24 Linear feet (1 box)

17

# Next steps

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Create record templates and boilerplate text for Conditions Governing Access note

Review observations and data of reference and Reading Room use

Create new goals and scenarios and test again



# Thanks!

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Grand Valley State University