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The Revised DACS Principles in Action: Applying Modern Practice to Legacy Description

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The Revised DACS Principles in Action

Applying Modern Practice to Legacy Description

Rebecca A. Wiederhold & Ryan Lee, BYU

Becky Skeen, Paul Daybell, Kelly Rovegno, & Heather Housley, USU

Presentation Overview

- Introduction – Revision of DACS principles

- **BYU** – William Gates papers project
  - Principles 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11

- **USU** – University Archives mass description project
  - Principles 1, 4, 7, 9

- Questions

Revision of DACS Principles: Timeline

Aug. 2016

Experts/TS-DACS evaluate existing principles

March 2017

Experts/TS-DACS develop new principles

June 2017

TS-DACS calls for community comments

August 2018

TS-DACS issues 2nd call for community comments

May 2019

SAA Council approves new principles

New DACS Principles: user-centered & ethics-informed

1. Archival description expresses professional **ethics and values**.

2. **Users** are the fundamental reason for archival description.

3. … descriptive rules apply equally to all records…

4. Records, agents, activities, and the **relationships between them** are the four fundamental concepts that constitute archival description.

5. Archival description must **be clear about what archivists know**, what they don't know, and **how** they know it.

6. Archivists must **document and make discoverable** the actions they take on records.

7. Archival description is **accessible**.

8. Archival description should be **easy to use, re-use, and share**.

9. Each collection within a repository must have an archival description.

10. Archivists must have a **user-driven** reason to enhance existing archival description.

11. Archival description is a **continuous** intellectual endeavor.
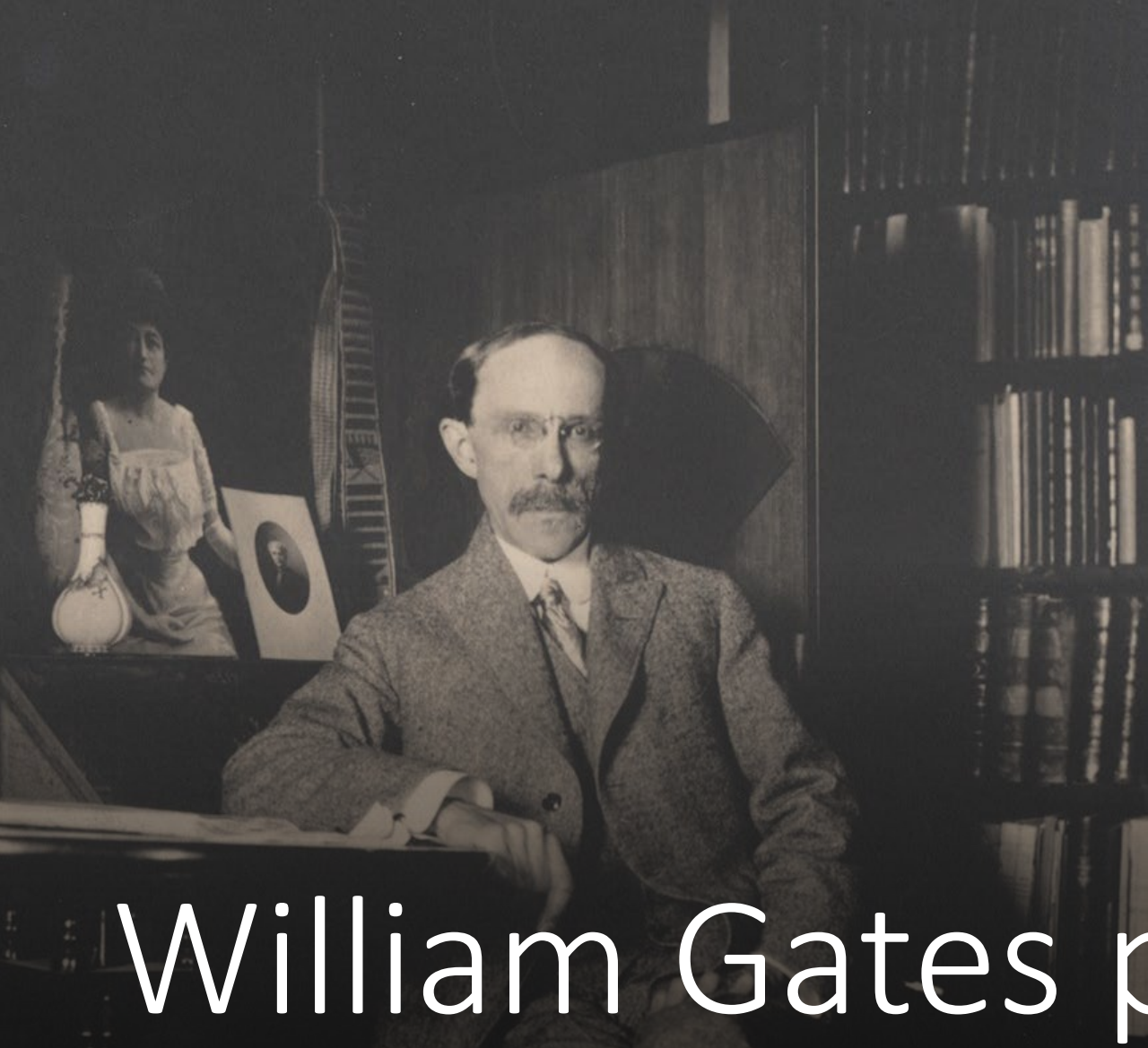
William Gates papers

WILLIAM E. GATES
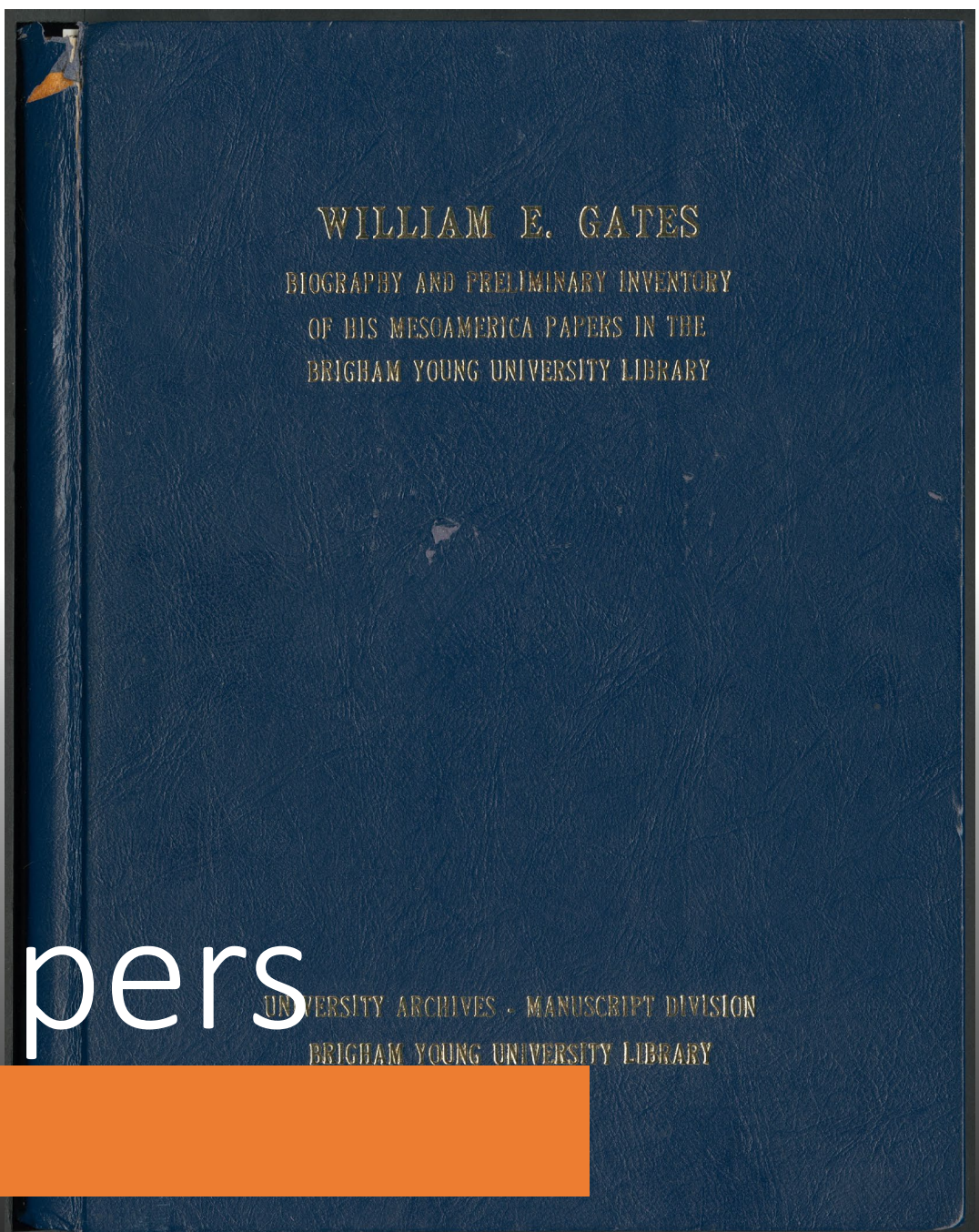
BIOGRAPHY AND PRELIMINARY INVENTORY
OF HIS MESOAMERICA PAPERS IN THE
BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Principle 2

Users are the fundamental reason for archival description.

Principle 5

• Archival description must be clear about what archivists know, what they don't know, and how they know it.

MESOAMERICAN ETHNOHISTORY

IN UNITED STATES LIBRARIES

Reconstruction of the William E. Gates Collection

of Historical and Linguistic Manuscripts

COMPILED BY JOHN M. WEEKS

Principle 6

Archivists must document and make discoverable the actions they take on records.

| General Note_new	Evidence for changes
Weeks, 726	Changed title to match the one for the transcription. The "De litera a" portion appears to just have been taken from the first image, but Weeks has a different title. Our title will not 100% match Weeks since we do not have the title page and want this title to match the ones already in the finding aid. Also changed date to match Weeks, and added Weeks number.
Weeks, 726	No issues with pagination or other notes. Just added Weeks number.
Weeks, 728. Photostat does not include the title page found on the original at University of Pennsylvania.	Changed title and date to match the original at UPenn. Existence and Location of Originals note changed to match how we have done these in the past for UPenn items, and because the library specified appears to be an error or no longer correct.

Vocabulario de la lengua Cakchiquel / por el R. P. Fray Benito de Villacañas ornis ; Prery, hecho despues de aver tratado cuarenta años con los indios de esta lengua sin interupción con ejemplo y zelo de las animos muy singular cuyo fruto y premio goza ahora en los jardines de la gloria

Page 1

VOCABVLARIO EN LENGVA CACCHIQVEL

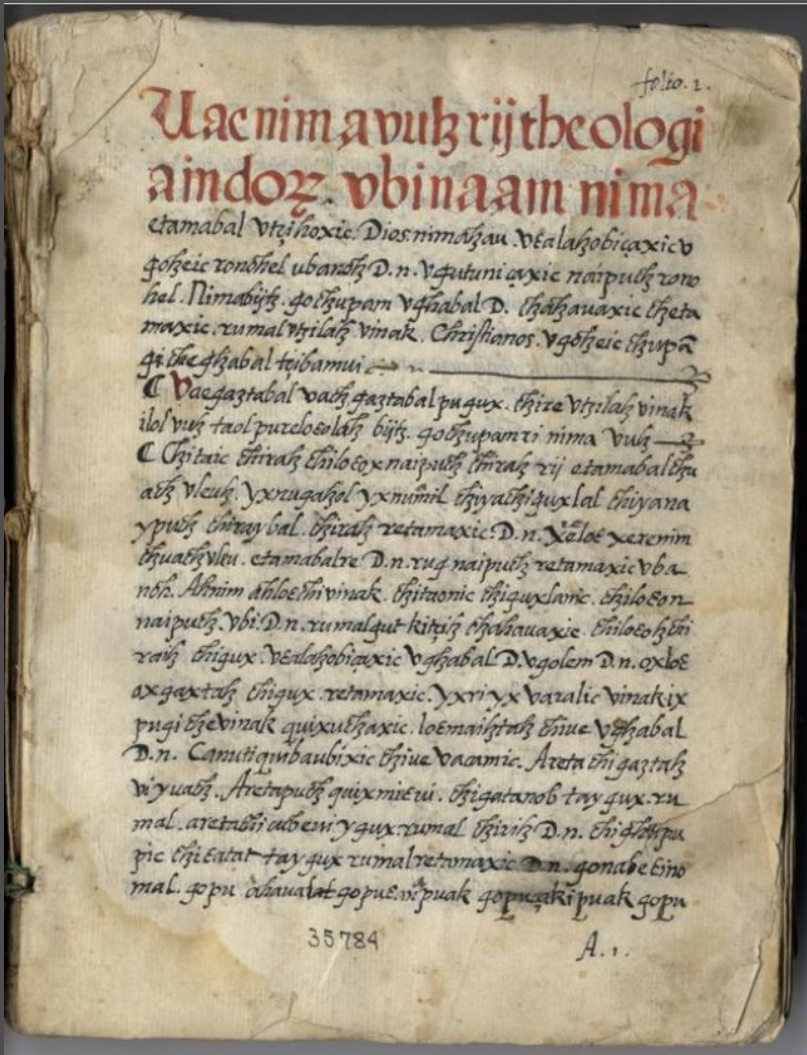Por el P.e fray Benito de Villa cañas ornis. Prery hecho des pues de auer tra ta do quarénta años con los indios de esta lengua sin in terrupcion con exemplo y zelo de las ánimas muy singular cuyo fruto y premio goza aora en los fardines de la Gloria. Trasladado 10 de Noviembre de 1692 a

1 of 348
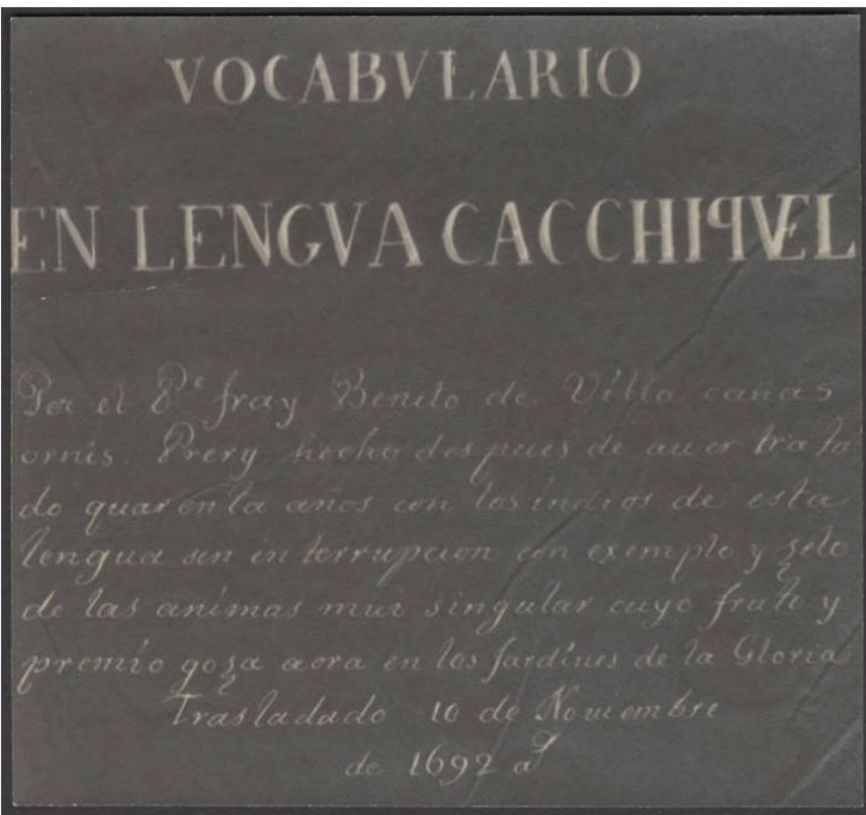
ARTE Y VOCABVLARIO

DE LA LENGUA CAKCHIQUEL

POR EL R. P.

FRAY BENITO DE VILLACAÑAS

DE LA ORDEN DE SANTO DOMINGO.

COPIADO EN NUEVA YORK
1871.

Example from American Philosophical Society's catalogue

Mayan Language Texts, 1553-1727

Mss.497.43.V42

Top

Abstract

Collection information

Indexing Terms

Detailed inventory

7. Vico, Domingo de, 1485-1555.	1553, 1605	1 volume(s) 1	volume 1	Request Item for
Theologia Indorum (Mss.497.4.Ua13)		volume, 185		Reading Room Access
		leaves ; 1		
		volume, 185		Request a Copy of this
		leaves.		Item

Abstract: The *Theologia Indorum* ("Theology for the Indians" or "Theology of the Indians") was written by the Spanish Dominican friar Domingo de Vico from 1552-1554. It is considered the first original Christian theology written in the Americas and the longest single text written in an indigenous language of the Americas in the colonial era. Written in K'iche' (sometimes written as "Quiché," a Mayan language of Guatemala, it played a major role in evangelization of the Highland Maya. Previous identifications of the content of the manuscript misidentified it as being in the Kaqchikel language and as consisting of sermons and biblical translation. The content, however, is an original theological work that utilizes indigenous religous beliefs and cultural practices to explain Christian doctrine. This version is the first of two volumes of the *Theologia Indorum*, pertaining to topics from the Old Testament. Other versions of the *Theologia* exist at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France and at Princeton University. This is the oldest manuscript in the APS Library's collections written in an indigenous language of the Americas.

Provenance: Donor, Academia de Ciencias de Guatemala, through Mariano Galvez, 1836.

Other Descriptive Information: This item was previously cataloged as "Uae nima vutz rij theologi aindox ubinaam nima," which are its opening lines. Retitled as "Theologia Indorum" in 2017 in light of scholarship by Drs. Sergio Romero, Frauke Sachse, and Garry Sparks.

Other Descriptive Information: To request this item, please see the full finding aid for this specific manuscript: Theologia Indorum (Mss.497.4.Ua13)

Principle 8

Archival description should
be easy to use, re-use, and share.

Users are best able to use, re-use, and share archival description when:

- it is discoverable
- it is structured
- it is machine-readable
- it is machine-actionable
- it is available under an open license

--DACS introduction

BYU Photostat

Princeton Original

18

Principle 10

Archivists must have a user-driven reason to enhance existing archival description.

Factors for deciding to enhance a finding aid

- Prominence of the collection

- Level of use of the collection

- Known errors that cause users difficulty

- Corrections will directly benefit multiple users

Adding citation numbers

Principle 11

Archival description is a continuous intellectual endeavor
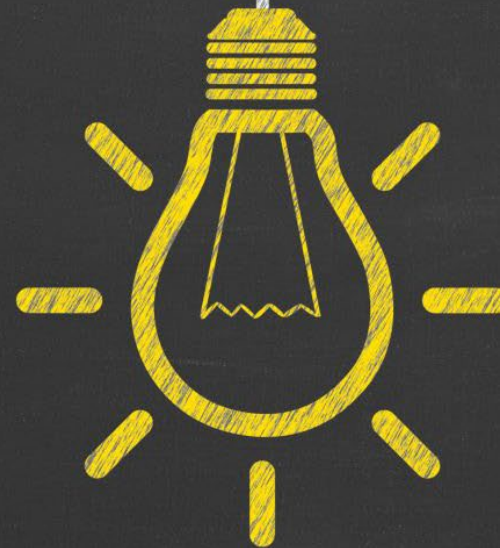
USU University Archives mass description project

Why this Project?

Problem

University Archivist retiring

Implementation of ArchivesSpace

Lack of inventory control

Limited dicoverability
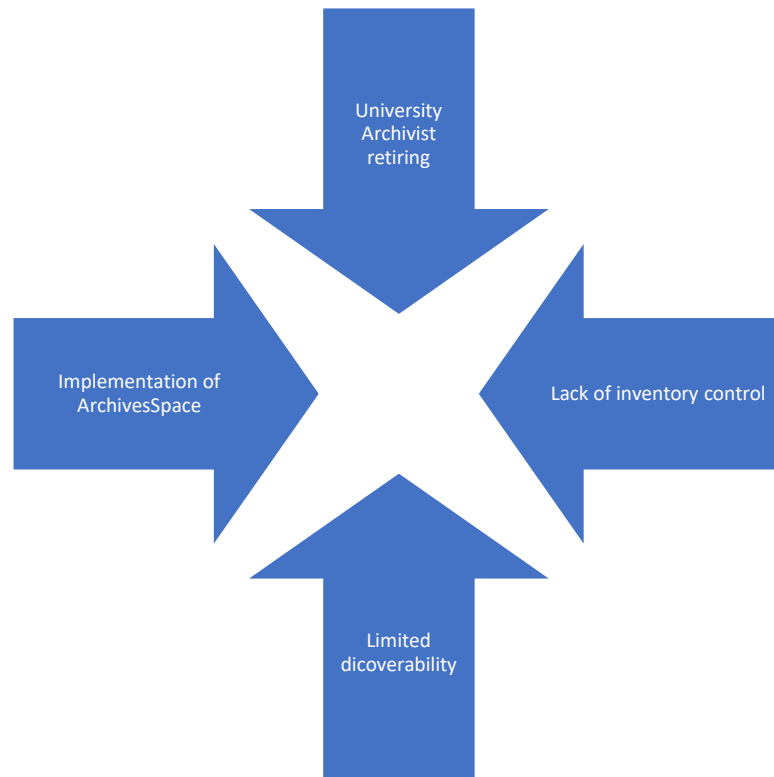
Solution

UA Remediation Project to:

❑ Create inventory of entire University Archives Collection

❑ Allow for easier tracking of materials and usage statistics

❑ Create electronic finding aids for record groups as needed

❑ Create cataloging records for UA material

Principle 7

Archival description is accessible

Finding Aid Blitz

How do you create 2600 finding aids in a pinch?

How do you create 2600 finding aids in a pinch?

Finding Aid Blitz

UA EAD Guides and Online Visits

Detailed Description of the Collection ▼
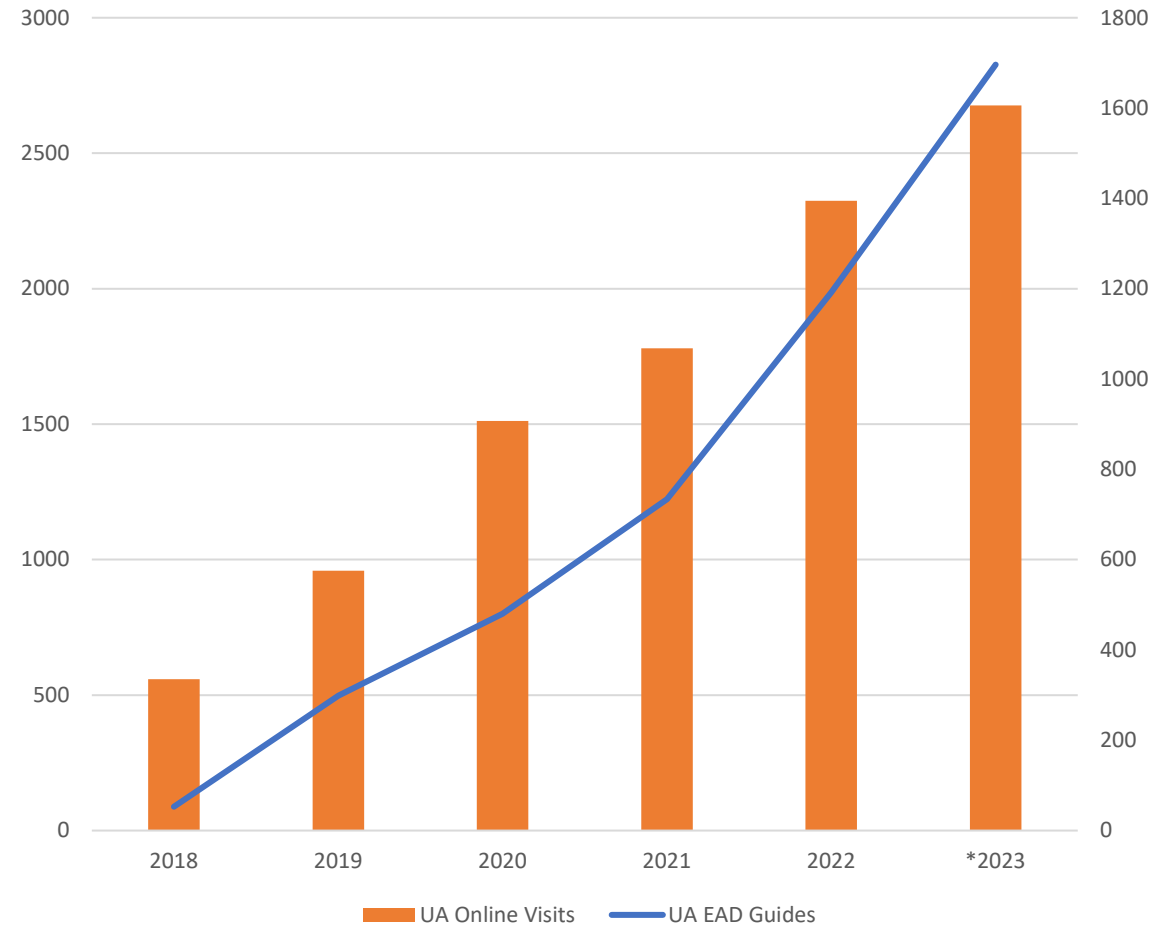
Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box		
1	Personal Papers	1968-1974
1a	Personal Papers Addendum to Daryl Chase Papers Some files may be classified confidential according to the Utah Government Records Access Management Act (GRAMA) Do not access without permission of Archivist	1931-1978
2	Personal Papers Addendum to Daryl Chase Papers Some files may be classified confidential according to the Utah	1960-1971
3	Personal Papers Addendum to Daryl Chase Papers	1952-

Principle 9

Each collection within a repository must have an archival description.

"The absence of archival description is a barrier to users and good stewardship. In order to access archival collections, users must know which collections a repository holds. No matter how basic a description may be, it is more advantageous to users than no description at all." —Describing Archives: A Content Standard, Version 2022.

USU University Archives & Description

Before this project:

- Approximately 25-33% of University Archives material available electronically (mostly published works cataloged in Sierra, 2% of collections had electronic finding aids)

- Rest of materials (67-75%) only discoverable through paper finding aids and the physical card catalog in the Special Collections' Tanner Reading Room

Collection Description & Stewardship

◇
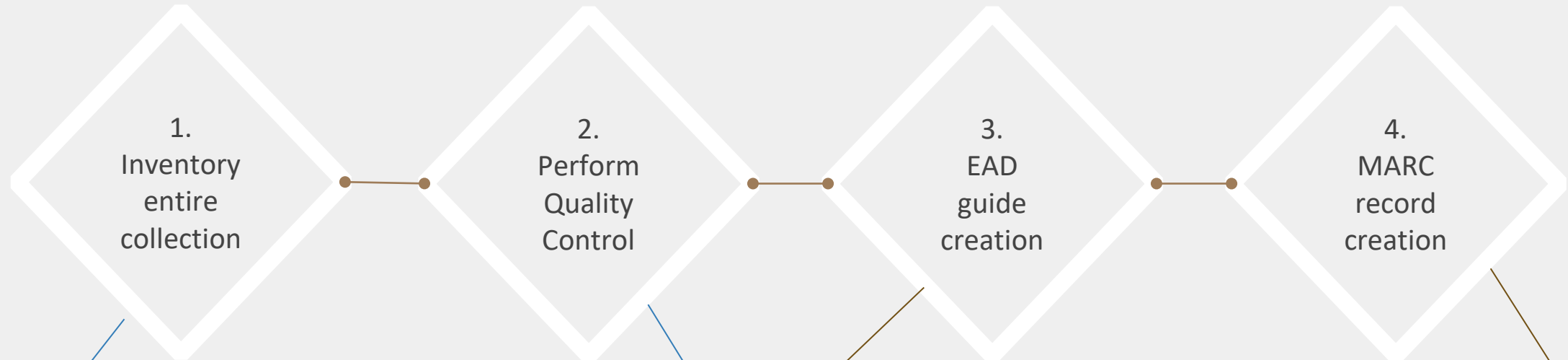
1.
Inventory entire collection

2.
Perform Quality Control

3.
EAD guide creation

4.
MARC record creation

Stewardship:
Provides access to a better, broader sense of the scope of our holdings (DACS, 2022)

Stewardship:
Creates the ability for archivists to gather information about how collections are used and guidance for future appraisal and acquisition choices (DACS, 2022

University Archives Inventory Entries (Airtable)

_fx_ Barcoded item	A Index Title	A Box Title Transcribed	≡ Item Description	[||||] Barcode	A Date Range	A No...(i)	(v) Container Type
1.4/2-1:38 Box 1 1984	Utah State Board of Regents	New of Utah Higher Education	New of Utah Higher Education	39060020317094	1984	1984	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:38 Box 1 1985	Utah State Board of Regents	New of Utah Higher Education	New of Utah Higher Education	39060020317037	1985	1985	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:38a Box 1 19...	Utah State Board of Regents	Board of Regents in the News	Board of Regents in the News	39060020316971	1982	1982	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:38a Box 1 19...	Utah State Board of Regents	The Board of Regents in the News	Board of Regents in the News	39060020316914	1983	1983	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:38a Box 1 19...	Utah State Board of Regents	The Board of Regents in the News	Board of Regents in the News	39060020316856	1984	1984	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:43 Box 1	Advisory Council of the Utah ...	Regents		39060019725299	1963-1968	1963/1968	.25 Letter
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 1	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Academic freedom, profession...	39060019549814	1973 December 20	1973-12-20	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no....	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Utah State Board of Regents : ...	39060019549756	1978-1995	1978/1995	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no....	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Utah State Board of Regents : ...	39060019549699	1978-1995	1978/1995	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 3	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Low-producing vocational pro...	39060019549632	1977 February	1977-02	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 4	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Discussion of doctoral degree ...	39060019549574	1971 April	1971-04	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 5	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Regent orientation: Utah High...	39060019549517	1985 July 12	1985-07-12	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 6	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Progress report : Welding Tec...	39060019549459	1978 November 15	1978-11-15	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 7	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Second rough draft for prelimi...	39060019549392	1973 January 26	1973-01-26	Letter sized Folder
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no. 8	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Utah State University : analysis...	39060019549400	1975 December 15	1975-12-15	Book/Bound Volume
1.4/2-1:63 Box 1 no....	Utah State Board of Regents	Report nos. 1-16	Utah State University : analysis...	39060019549467	1975 December 15	1975-12-15	Book/Bound Volume

Principle 4

Records, agents, activities, and the relationships between them are the four fundamental concepts that constitute archival description.

Principle 4

Records must be described in aggregate and may

be described in parts - the WHOLE gives meaning

and coherence to the parts

The Institute for the Study of Outdoor Recreation
and Tourism

17.14:38

Record Group (Research Programs)
Sub-group (Institute for the Study of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism)
Collection (Newsletters)

17.14 Record Group (Research Programs)
Sub-group (Institute for the Study of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism)

:1 Speeches, Addresses

:7 Bibliographies

:11 Resource Bulletin

:23 Reports

:36 Pamphlets, surveys

:37 Monographs

:43 Reports

:45 Papers

:47 Annual Reports

:54 Proceedings

:59 Proposals

:64 Reprints

:66 Research reports

:71 Study

:72 Utah Recreation Facts

:72a Utah Recreation Facts

:73 Outdoor Recreation Reports

:73a Outdoor Recreation Reports

:76 Studies

:78 Summary Reports

:79 Survey

:81 Symposium

Original arrangement:

- General information
- Speeches
- Bibliographies
- Resource bulletin
- **Reports**
- Miscellaneous
- Monographs
- **Reports**
- Papers
- Annual reports
- Proceedings
- Proposals
- Reprints
- Research reports
- Studies
- Utah Recreation Facts
- Utah Recreations Facts (a)
- **Reports**
- **Reports**
- Studies
- Summary reports
- Surveys
- Symposium

23 distinct call numbers

14.25 linear feet

1 single collection

8.75 linear feet

Approx. 18 hours to

- physically arrange and rehouse
- change cutter numbers on items
- change Airtable data
- edit Sierra records/
- add Sierra records
- and relabel boxes

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

25.3/4
25.3/4-1
25.3/4-1:17
25.3/4-1:22
25.3/4-1:47
25.3/4-1:47a
25.3/4-1:79
25.3/4-1b
25.3/4-1b:22
25.3/4-1b:38
25.3/4-1b:59
25.3/4:17
25.3/4:63

Before: 13 collections – 1.75 linear feet

After: 1 collection – 1.25 linear feet

18.21/1-	1:90
18.21/1-	1:91
18.21/1-	2:40
18.21/1-	2:90
18.21/1-	2:91
18.21/1-	2:92
18.21/1-	3:36
18.21/1-	3:40
18.21/1-	3:61
18.21/1-	3:90
18.21/1-	3:92
18.21/1-	4:36
18.21/1-	4:39
18.21/1-	4:40
18.21/1-	4:41
18.21/1-	4:46
18.21/1-	4:93
18.21/1-	5:46
18.21/1-	5:47
18.21/1-	5:90
18.21/1-	5:91
18.21/1-	5:92
18.21/1-	6:27
18.21/1-	6:30
18.21/1-	6:40
18.21/1-	6:90
18.21/1-	6:92
18.21/1-	7:90
18.21/1-	7:91
18.21/1-	8:90
18.21/1-	8:92
18.21/1-	9:23
18.21/1-	9:27
18.21/1-	9:27
18.21/1-	9:36
18.21/1-	9:79
18.21/1-	10:27
18.21/1-	11

UTAH AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
UtahStateUniversity

38 different call numbers for 71 items

Principle 1

Archival description expresses professional ethics and values.

From SAA's Core Values Statement and Code of Ethics

- ## Ethics
- **Access and Use**
  - "Archivists should promote and provide the widest possible accessibility of materials, while respecting legal and ethical access."
- Accountability
- Advocacy
- **Diversity**
  - **"The archives profession must constantly work toward creating anti-oppressive environments that encourage participation from people across the spectrum of experience."**
- History and Memory
- Preservation
- **Responsible Stewardship**
  - **"Archivists commit to making ethical and transparent decisions about how to provide care for the documents, records, and materials entrusted to them."**
- Selection
- Service
- Social Responsibility
- Sustainability

- ## Values
- Professional Relationships
- **Judgment**
  - "While no element of archival work is unbiased or neutral, archivists still strive to exercise their ethical, professional judgment [in the]... processing of material."
- Security and Protection
- **Authenticity**
  - "Using archival description, they document the unique archival characteristics of records, including their intellectual, digital, and physical integrity."
- Access and Use
- Privacy
- Trust

Adopting Best Practices

- Critical that description in new finding aids met DACS standards

  - Provides a consistent and useable description to internal and external users

  - Finding aids used in regional consortium to provide widest access possible

More descriptive and accessible description

Box Title Transcribed	Final Box Title	Item Description
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	How Utah State University Changed the World
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Val R. Christensen Service Center flyers
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Directory of Student Services
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Resource Guides, Pamphlets, Service Evaluations
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	The division of student services overview
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Newsletters, Visitors Guide, Pamphlets
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Memoranda and flyers
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	FAST track newsletter
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	2020-2021 Annual Report
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Evaluation: student services and programs
General and Miscellaneous	Handbooks, pamphlets, and other materials	Student services overview

Item Description
Black Student Union Flyers, Reunion Booklet
Multicultural Student Pamphlets, Newsletters, Program...
Polynesian Student Union Flyers
LatinX Student REP week flyers

|	
For Contents see Register	Phi Kappa Phi financial statements, correspondence, meeting minutes
For Contents see Register	Phi Kappa Phi financial statements, correspondence, meeting minutes
For Contents see Register	Phi Kappa Phi financial statements, correspondence, meeting minutes
For Contents see Register	Phi Kappa Phi financial statements, correspondence, meeting minutes
For Contents see Register	Phi Kappa Phi financial statements, correspondence, meeting minutes

Using language used by creators (when appropriate!) with acknowledgment that language always changes and description is never completely finished

Description as an Iterative Process

- QC process presented unique opportunity to create DACS compliant description, add or update description where needed, and consolidate collections.

- Already pulling material for QC. Avoids having to do work again in the ~ future ~

- Acknowledge work is resource and time intensive. This step as added an additional workflow to an already large project and required staff member with MLIS

Going Forward

- Completing Finding Aids for University Archives has resulted in a 2,253% increase in discovery.

- Continue to improve structure of University Archives and quality of description

University Archives Finding Aids
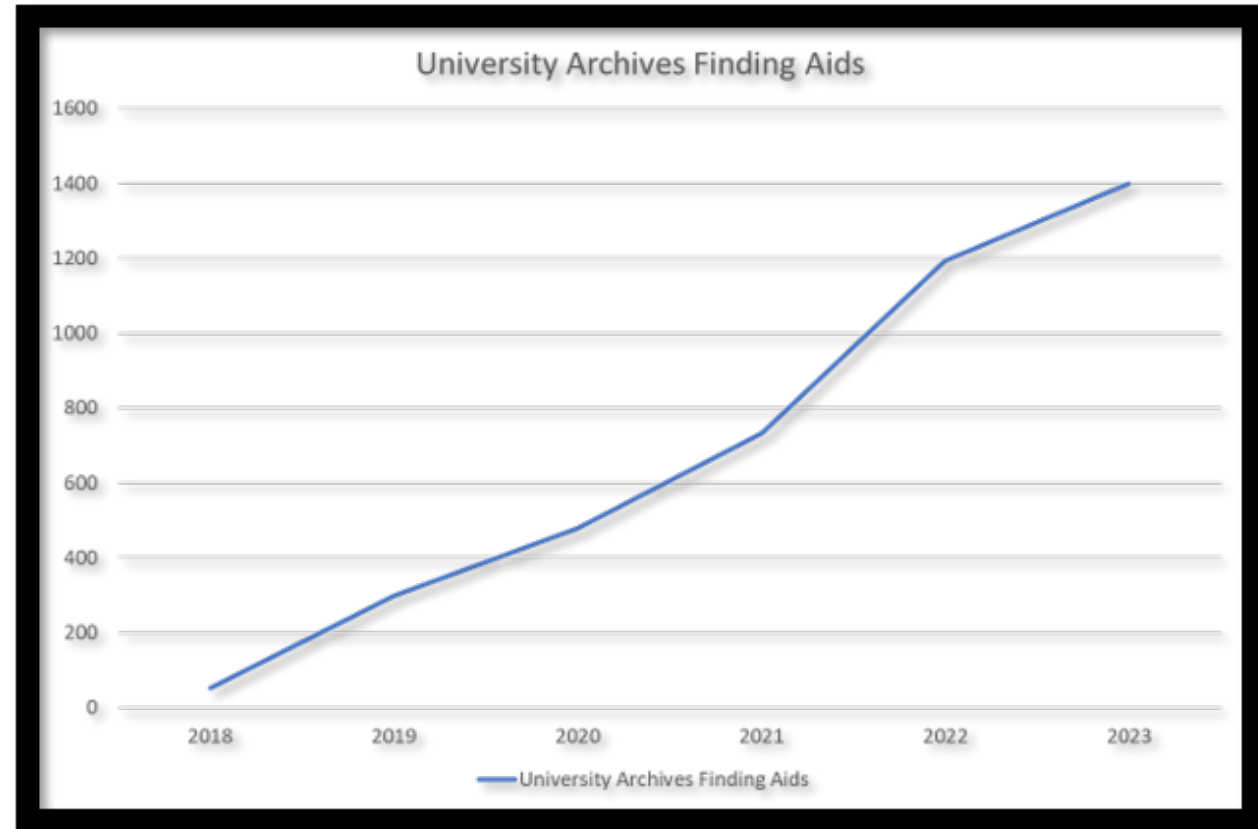
rebecca_wiederhold@byu.edu

ryan_lee@byu.edu

becky.skeen@usu.edu

paul.daybell@usu.edu

kelly.rovegno@usu.edu

heather.housley@usu.edu

Questions?