

Spartan Archive Designated Community Survey UAHC Reference Staff

Date: March 10-11, 2011

Interviews with three UAHC reference archivists

What types of researchers have asked you about information on current and past academic programs and/or courses offered by Michigan State or about students who attended the university? (Select all that apply.)

Students
Transfer Students
Former Students/Alumni
Faculty/Staff/Administrators
Staff from Other Universities
Other researchers
Other (explain)

- ✓ Ed—students, former students, faculty, genealogists
- ✓ Sarah—all of the above
- ✓ Portia—students (grad and undergrad), former students/alums, faculty/staff, genealogists, outside researchers tracing histories of/writing papers or books on specific students who have gone on to do significant work

Assign approximate percentages of the total of researchers asking about these records to the categories above.

- ✓ Ed—90% students and genealogists
- ✓ Portia—equal between student research/people researching programs/requests for course descriptions (a bit smaller)

What questions or interests bring researchers to use the records that will be in the Spartan Archive? (By type of researcher. Describe as many research questions as come to mind.)

- ✓ Ed—mostly people doing historical research, students and genealogists looking for info on former students, verifying that someone was on campus/in attendance, students doing research on history of departments for anniversaries, etc.
- ✓ Sarah—students researching academic department histories, former students looking up classmates in student directories (where people lived), former students/alumni looking to get credit for courses taken, faculty/staff researching department histories, staff from other universities and potential employers confirming a student's attendance, genealogists
- ✓ Portia—students researching history of academic programs and when they started, former students/alumni going back to school and need copies of course descriptions for credit, faculty/staff looking up people know and doing academic program research, outside researchers tracing histories of/writing papers or books on specific students who have gone on to do significant work

What pieces of information/data were they most interested in? (For each type of research question, we want to know what most needs to be preserved, accessible, and searchable.)

✓ Ed

- Student information: name, dates of attendance, major
- Course descriptions: course number, course name, year offered
- Academic programs: year to year, what's changed—new staff, courses

✓ Sarah

- Student information: last name, attendance dates
- Courses/programs: department, course name, course number, keywords

✓ Portia

- Student information: last name, time frame, occasionally by major
- Courses/programs: name of program, date (not always known), program director's name (faculty directory), year, course number, sometimes instructor name

Are you usually able to help the researchers find the information they are looking for?

✓ Ed—Yes, except for students looking at Descriptions of Courses for credit, need more detail than provided (probably would need course syllabus for that)

✓ Sarah—Yes, although sometimes the catalogs/descriptions of courses are not descriptive enough for researchers' needs

✓ Portia—Yes

What historical resources are used most frequently to answer these questions?

Catalog of Academic Programs

Description of Courses

Annual Student Directory

Schedule of Courses

Yearbook

Other

✓ Ed—Alumni Catalogs too (published through 1930, old version of alumni database, alums voluntarily provided info about what they did after college), also ask about enrollment/demographic information

✓ Sarah—Alumni Catalogs

✓ Portia—Alumni Catalogs, faculty directories, annual reports by department, other departmental records, Board of Trustees minutes, M.A.C. Record if years are known (not indexed)

Do you ever refer to the Office of the Registrar's website to find this information?

Yes, frequently

Yes, sometimes

No

All three archivists sometimes refer to the RO's website.

- ✓Ed—especially for those wanting to verify classes for credit, for enrollment/demographic information
- ✓Sarah—those requiring enrollment information, also referrals for transcripts
- ✓Portia—enrollment report information, she provides links

If you or a researcher could search for this information electronically, how should the results be made available?

- Online screen presentation
- Online screen presentation with print option
- Report available for download
 - In what digital format(s)?
- Other

- ✓Ed—all of the above, with PDF option for downloaded reports
- ✓Sarah—Online screen presentation with print option that looks nicely formatted, report available for download in PDF if possible, but nicely formatted HTML might be more practical for a customized report (no conversions necessary). This latter option would be very nice for Enrollment Report data, but those aren't on the short list to be preserved and made available by Spartan Archive.
- ✓Portia—All. PDF would need to be crated on the fly though, which might be too much work. The digital format available for download would need to work across all likely user platforms.

Do you have any thoughts on the format of these presentations or reports, in terms of represented data fields?

- ✓Ed—Nice to create customized reports, option to pick more or fewer fields if there are a lot of fields, pickbox, landscape/portrait print options, option to resize columns
- ✓Portia—Provide both landscape and portrait printing options, option to pick data fields to print, all data fields should be available in one display

Do you know of any individual researcher(s) who might be worthwhile to interview about the use of these records?

- ✓Portia—May be able to track down a couple of students who researched history of departments/academic programs

**Spartan Archive Designated Community Survey
MSU Libraries Reference Staff**

Date: March 24, 2011

Focus group with seven MSU reference librarians

Does the Library keep copies of any of the following historical publications? (Note that these contain the types of records that will be included in Spartan Archive.)

Catalog of Academic Programs
Description of Courses
Annual Student Directory
Schedule of Courses

The Library does have current issues of these publications in the open stacks. Many are/could be missing, however. They have been asked about material from all but the Schedule of Courses. Other publications that they refer to frequently, and feel might benefit from being part of Spartan Archive in the future, include:

Faculty Directory

Not so much anymore, as information may be found online

Yearbooks

Would like Archives to have these digitized

Requests often come through MelCat

Salary books (Office of Planning and Budget, OPB)

Library has these for many years back

Library also has interim, non-official snapshots of salaries

OPB does not like to print this, Library must request

Only available online to university employees, others turn to Library

Online database available through EBS unreliable, excludes some units

Athletics

Enrollment Reports (RO)

Websites

MSUE electronic documents

Annual report on diversity (Office of Inclusion)

Now digital

Annual report from Office of Campus Sustainability

Michigan State University Statistics guides

Website with links to info

MSU Facts

International Studies programs

Career services data

Commencement programs

Transcripts of speeches

What types of researchers have asked you about information on current and past academic programs and/or courses offered by Michigan State or about students who attended the university?

Students

Transfer Students
Former Students/Alumni
Faculty/Staff/Administrators
Staff from Other Universities
Other researchers
Other: Prospective employers, prospective employees, friends, family, recruiters

What pieces of information/data were they most interested in?

For student information, they were most interested in finding people who attended the university (documenting participation), what years they attended, where they were from, no so much the students' majors

Prospective employers were most interested in salaries and teaching loads

Prospective grad students interested in thesis advisors

Prospective employees interested in salaries

Questions about groups, clubs, athletics

Lots of questions regarding enrollment information

Transfer students looking for degree requirements

What course is about, approach from all angles, whether core, # credit hours, name, course number, keywords

Are you usually able to help researchers find the information they are looking for?

If the Library has the information, they can usually find it.

If not, do you refer them to the MSU Archives, the Office of the Registrar, both, or another campus unit or organization?

If there are gaps, they send the researcher to the Archives.

They also go to the Office of the Registrar's website and sometimes to the Graduate Office

If you or a researcher could search for this information electronically, how should the results be made available?

Searchable PDF

Facility to send resource as well as discrete bits of info directly from search results screen, such as with Library catalog search screen

Overly query database that can access all databases, suggest other databases if not found

Independent digital signatures if from an official source

Available on mobile devices

Librarians had lots of ideas about access; should get more input from them about interface design when we get farther into this.

Spartan Archive Designated Community Survey Students

Date: March 22, 2011

Student name: [removed]

Degree program: Masters student in Student Affairs Administration

What questions brought you to use Michigan State's Description of Courses records?

Researching history of Student Affairs Administration Masters program for Fall 2010 class

Course required visit to Archives for research

Program started in 1949

Wanted to track the program development, see required core classes, how the curriculum changed over the years

What pieces of information/data were you most interested in? (For each type of research question, we want to know what most needs to be preserved, accessible, and searchable.)

Most interested in what was required of the course, program overall

Whether thesis required

Hours required

Descriptions of each course

Were you able to find the information you were looking for?

Was not able to find all the information he was looking for

From 1949 through mid 1980s, course catalogs did not call out core courses, just listed all courses

Had to make assumptions

Difficult, as course names changed

Change from quarter to semester system confused matters

In conducting your research, did you use any other resources from the Archives besides the Description of Courses?

Catalog of Academic Programs

College of Education materials from 1970s, brochure with information

Graduate course catalog

Did you ever refer to the Office of the Registrar's website to find this information?

Yes, sometimes—had info available electronically

Information at Archives was more helpful, as it went back further and staff was helpful

If you could have searched for this information electronically, how would you have like the results to be made available?

[Note: This question did not work well over the phone.]

In a perfect world, a report available as a PDF download would be best.