

Ball State University Libraries
Archives Research Graduate Assistant Position Description

Archives and Special Collections

Objective

The Graduate Assistant will participate in the operation of the unit, including providing reference service and participating in instructional sessions, organizing collections for access, planning and creating exhibits, and other tasks as required; learn and apply archival theory and methodology, as well as library practices; gain experience with research techniques by facilitating use of the collections; provide research support for the Assistant Dean of Digital Initiatives and Special Collections and the unit's professional archivists.

Duties/Responsibilities:

1. Provide reference service to users in the Archives and Special Collections, including identifying and retrieving appropriate materials and information to facilitate access to collections and to answer reference and research inquiries received via fax, e-mail, correspondence, telephone, and in person. Participate in instructional sessions for classes using archival materials. Responsible for staffing the Reading Room at least one evening each week.
2. Process archives and manuscript collections, including organizing and describing materials and creating appropriate finding aids, according to professional archival standards.
3. Plan and prepare in-house and Web-based exhibits, including researching topic, selecting items, writing text, organizing and mounting materials.
4. Provide research support for the Assistant Dean of Digital Initiatives and the unit's professional archivists by conducting research for publications, grants, and other projects. Assist in preparing reports and grant proposals as needed.
5. Perform other duties as assigned.

Work Load:

The Graduate Assistant works twenty hours per week, during times Archives and Special Collections is open. The work schedule is based on the Graduate Assistant's schedule and on the scheduling needs of the unit. The work schedule may include evening hours.

Selection:

Guidelines for the Award of Graduate Assistantships are generally applicable. The person will be selected from a pool of candidates provided by the Ball State Department of History. The candidate selected for the position will have experience in archives, libraries, history, or other areas related to archival work; research and/or instructional experience; good written and verbal communication skills; ability to work well with the public and other staff members; computer experience; and appreciation for rare and unique materials that require special and careful handling. Moderate to heavy lifting may be required.

Supervision:

The Graduate Assistant reports to the Assistant Dean for Digital Initiatives and Special Collections. The daily duties of the position, except for research support for the Assistant Dean and archivists, are supervised by the Archives and Special Collections Supervisor, in consultation with the Assistant Dean. The Supervisor writes the schedule, assigns work, and is responsible for training the Graduate Assistant in required duties. Research activities in support of projects are assigned and supervised by the Assistant Dean. The Supervisor and the Assistant Dean interact with the Graduate Assistant throughout the week; formal meetings are held as needed.

The Graduate Assistant may supervise undergraduate students on special projects.

Evaluation/Renewal/Termination:

The Graduate Assistant is evaluated informally throughout the year by the Assistant Dean, with input from the Archives and Special Collections Supervisor. Evaluation is based on performance of the duties outlined in the *duties/responsibilities* section of this document, as well as attendance, punctuality, reliability, and professionalism.

Each April, the Graduate Assistant's contract is reviewed. The decision to renew or terminate the contract is based on work performance and whether the assistantship is still available. A recommendation is made by mid-April.

Circumstances that would lead to termination include: inability to provide effective reference assistance, inability to process materials to acceptable professional standards, unexcused or unreasonable absences or tardiness, breach of confidentiality when working with confidential or sensitive materials, failure to follow unit rules and policies.

Other:

The Graduate Assistant must demonstrate trustworthiness in handling rare and valuable materials and must maintain confidentiality when working with confidential or sensitive materials. Appropriate dress and personal grooming is required in working with the public.

Stipend/Fee Remission:

Graduate assistants receive a tuition waiver and a yearly stipend, paid over 10 months. The amount of the stipend may change from year to year. Graduate students also receive a remission of the contingent portion of the general fee, remission of the graduate course fee, and an out-of-state fee waiver. Summer assistantships may be available. The stipend for summer assistantships is 15% of base salary (stipend) per summer session.