

Ball State University Libraries
Graduate Assistant Position Description

Archives and Special Collections

Objective:

The Archives and Special Collections Graduate Assistant will participate in the operation of the unit, including providing reference service, 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.

Duties/Responsibilities:

1. Provide reference service to users in 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.
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. 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 candidate selected for the position will have experience and/or interest in research, libraries, genealogy, or other areas related to archival work is required; 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 works under the general supervision of the Archives Specialist, who in turn reports to the Assistant Dean for Digital Scholarship and Special Collections. The Archives Specialist, in consultation with the Assistant Dean, writes the schedule, assigns work, and is responsible for training the Graduate Assistant in required duties. The Archives Specialist, the Assistant Dean, and other Archives staff 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 for Digital Scholarship and Special Collections, with input from the Archives Specialist and the archivists. 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 when 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.