

# The Role of University Archive for Managing Archival Materials: A Case Study of University of North Bengal

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## Abstract

*This paper gives a brief introduction about the archive and university archive. It also discusses the objectives, policies to be frame out, users' category, and collection of archival material. By using ICT infrastructure and latest technology, archival materials are to be stored, organized, and preserved in digital format and made available to its end users for searching and browsing by introducing open source software, DSpace. It shows a comparison between university archive and institutional repositories for the purpose of developing a repositories or archives. It also gives some experiences for implementation of university archive at University of North Bengal.*

**Keywords:** Archival Materials, Archive, Archivist, Digital Preservation, DSpace, ICT Infrastructure, Institutional Repositories, Open Source Software, University Archive

## 1. Introduction

The word 'archive' was originally developed from the Greek word 'arkheion' which refers to the home or dwelling of the Archon, in which important official documents were filed and interpreted under the authority of the Archon. The plural form of 'archive' is 'archives'. Some institutions are used the term 'archive' instead of the term 'archives', and vice-versa, but both of them are used for same purposes.

University archive constitutes records in historical evidence and serves as original sources for the reconstruction of the past and the interpretation of current experiences. The university has a responsibility to preserve those records that document have its own history and development and that reflect the university's intellectual, social, and spiritual contributions to the community. Those records are required by university administrators,

faculty, the institutional historian and other scholars who are interested in the impact of the university in the community and the history of higher education. This means that archives (the places) are quite distinct from libraries with regard to their functions and organization, although archival collection can often be found within library buildings.

## 2. Archive

An archive is a location, in which, the collection of historical records that have endure value, is kept. The archives contain records of primary source documents which have accumulated over the lifetime of an individual or organization. The archives of an individual may include letters, papers, photographs, computer files, scrapbooks, financial records or diaries, created by the individual in all media or format. The archives of an organization (such as corporation or government) have a tendency to restrain other types of records, i.e. administrative files, business



records, memos, official correspondence and meeting minutes.

Generally, the archives consist of records which have been selected for permanent or long-term preservation for their enduring research value. Archival materials are normally unpublished and almost always unique, unlike books or magazines for which many identical copies exist. It provides information about the university's history, organization, function and structures and conveys evidence of its policies and decisions.

### 3. University Archive

University archive is the official repository for any material created by the university that reflects the history or activities of the university and has enduring value. The university archive is the repository of a broad range of materials including official records, printed publications, photographs, and memorabilia, documenting the history and present activities of a university. The holdings of the university archive are related to the entire university system. A person who works in archives is called archivist.

The archive serves as the institutional memory of the university and plays an important role in the management of the institution's information resources in all media and formats. To fulfill the responsibilities of that role, the archive identifies, acquires and maintain records of enduring value that chronicle the development of the institution and ensure its continues existence.

### 4. Aims and Objectives

The university archive aims to storage, preserve, organize and provide access to the records, those have archival importance for its members of the

university. It endeavors to collect archival material that reflects the activities of its staff and which also reflects every aspect of university both to support teaching and research and to act as the corporate record, thereby protecting the rights of all university members.

- ❖ to identifying and collecting those records generated and collected by the university considered to be worthy of permanent preservation,
- ❖ to ensuring appropriate conditions for their storage, security and preservation,
- ❖ to the arrangement and description of the material so as to make it accessible for use as information and research resources and according to archival principles,
- ❖ to promoting and encouraging the use of the records by university members and the wider public.

It will make every effort to avoid conflict and duplication with the collecting policies of other record repositories.

### 5. Users

The archive primarily serves users throughout the institution. But, access to archival records may be restricted or unrestricted, depending on the type of record and any restrictions placed by a donor. Faculty, administrators/officers, research scholars, students and other individuals are likely to be the potential users of the University Archive. They are expressed as follows:

- ❖ **Faculty:** They use the archive for teaching and research in collections that provide unique materials and have intellectual history and

historical value that reflected in the archival materials of the institution.

❖ **Administrators/officers:** They have ready access to the permanent record, which includes:

- ◆ documents that provide evidence of transactions and essential decisions to the functions of the institution, preserved on a stable environment for those offices which may require them;

- ◆ documents that enhance the image of the institution, essential to the activities of offices responsible for fundraising and outreach (e.g., advancement office, public relations, admissions, etc.);

- ◆ documents which support significant interaction with past post-graduates (e.g., by the alumni office, which is principally responsible for retaining those ties) by making available archival materials, which evoke as documents of post – graduates.

❖ **Research Scholars:** They writing their research paper as established research scholars with extensive publications—benefit from the richness and reliability of archival collections. An institution can reach and serve more research based community by supporting an archival component within its educational mission.

❖ **Students:** They connect with the institution by learning about its history and placing themselves within that context. Access to archival materials that support curriculum and introduce them to the excitement and original research enhances their educational experience.

❖ **Visitors & abroad:** The archive offers services extend beyond the reach of our campus.

If you are visitors or abroad, the archive always help you with your research.

## **6. Policies**

The university archive should set up a number of policies.

### **6.1 The Collection Policy**

The collection policy should be framed out in the context of scope and content of the records to be collected for the university archive. It covers what the archive will collect, what the limits of the collection will be and what types of material are of particular interest. The university archive should provide a complete and accurate picture of the university’s organization and governance, its functions and activities, major developments and achievements, and relationships with its various stakeholders as these are reflected in the university’s administrative records must be mentioned in the university’s collection policy.

### **6.2 The Selection Policy**

The selection policy should be framed out in the context of the collection policy that fulfill the archives’ objectives in selecting records for permanent preservation and the criteria applied in records appraisal. The policy is intended as a working tool for staff of the archive involved in the day to day selection of records and is to operate in the context that space and other resources in the archive are necessary limited.

### **6.3 The Access Policy**

The access policy should be framed out the regulations governing to access material in the archive. The collections in the university archive are available for use by university faculty, officers,

staff, students and research scholars as well as the general public, governed by the usage rules set by the university authority. The archive reserves the right to restrict records on the basis of confidentiality or according to agreements made with the donor of collections. The archive also reserves the right to restrict access to unprocessed collections.

### 7. Collection of Archival Materials

There are the categories of archival materials in the following list that support an archive function of the universities:

- ❖ Architectural records and drawings of buildings.
- ❖ Artifacts of miscellaneous items associated with university events and activities, correspondence, memoranda and other files maintained to record the activities of officers and/or administrators, alumni, etc.
- ❖ Course curriculum, syllabus, materials that describe special programs or seminars, enrolment record.
- ❖ University honors papers, theses and dissertations completed by undergraduate or post-graduate students.
- ❖ Minutes of all meetings of governing bodies and major committees.
- ❖ Photographs, slides and films that pertain to events and personnel.
- ❖ Personal published papers of university officers, faculty, and staff.
- ❖ University publication of newsletters, bulletins, brochures, handbooks, news releases,

promotional literature, papers and related publications produced by administrative units, academic departments and student organizations.

- ❖ Annual reports, financial reports of different departments of the university system.
- ❖ Student activities records of associations, including membership rosters, programs of events and related materials.
- ❖ Tape recordings of audio and/or video recordings of events or performances deemed to have historical significance.
- ❖ Newspaper clippings of news published on university in various newspapers.

### 8. ICT Infrastructure

To cope up with the latest trends and technology, the university archive should be set up with different ICT infrastructure along with skilled manpower and within air-conditioned environment;

- ❖ Server
- ❖ Personal Computer with CD/DVD and UPS connected with LAN
- ❖ Internet connectivity
- ❖ Scanner
- ❖ Digital camera
- ❖ Network printer-copier
- ❖ Storage media: CD, DVD, Pen Drive, Hard-disk, etc.
- ❖ Softwares:
  - ◆ Operating system (Windows or LINUX)
  - ◆ Open Source Software (Greenstone, DSpace, etc.)
  - ◆ Utility software (MS-Office, Acrobat Reader, Word to PDF converter, etc.)

## 9. Organization and Preservation of Archival Materials

Digitalization is the process of converting paper documents (text, graphics, images and pictures) into digital images using scanners, digital cameras or other imaging technologies for access and preservation purpose. PDF (Portable Document Format) is a widely used format for digitization a project. It provides an easy solution to see and downloading the files instantly and quickly. We may download and install the software freely from the internet for doing the tasks, or we may purchase the software for converting the files from Word format to PDF format. Those files may be accessible via internet and web technologies by the use of suitable open source software, like- Dspace, for searching or browsing of stored data, maintained in proper heading or sub-heading of each community and sub-community.

The term digital preservation refers to preservation of materials that are created originally in digital as well as those converted from legacy documents and artifacts (printed documents, pictures, photographs or physical objects) into images using scanners, digital cameras or other imaging technologies for access and preservation purpose.

### 10. Software for University Archive

The hardware and software are required for developing University Archive. There are many world renowned free open source software available for develop University Archive, such as, DSpace, EPrints, Greenstone Digital Library Software (GSDLS), FEDORA, ARNO, etc.

#### 10.1 DSpace

DSpace is an open source software package, jointly developed by MIT libraries and HP labs. It is freely

available in the internet and easy to install. The software may be Windows-based and/or Linux-based. It captures data in any format like text, video, audio and data. It serves indexes of the work and provides feasibility to the users to search and retrieve the documents. It preserves the digital collections for long term. This software allows the communities and users to publish their articles remotely on the archives.

We have tested the software on linux platform. The following other packages would be required to run DSpace on linux platform:

- ❖ Download and install Java Development Kit (JDK): Download it from <http://java.sun.com/javase/downloads/index.jsp>
- ❖ Download and install Apache Ant: Download it from <http://ant.apache.org/bindownload.cgi>
- ❖ Download and install Apache Maven: Download it from <http://maven.apache.org/download.html>
- ❖ Download and install PostgreSQL: Download it from <http://www.postgresql.org/download/windows>
- ❖ Download and install Apache Tomcat: Download it from <http://tomcat.apache.org/download-60.cgi>
- ❖ Download DSpace and configure it for installation. Download it from <http://sourceforge.net/projects/dspace/files>

### 11. University Archives vs. Institutional Repositories

On the basis of these two phenomenons, university archive and institutional repository, Raym Crow

observes that: “Depending on the university, an institutional repository may complement or compete with the role served by the university archives. University archives serve two purposes: 1) to manage administrative records to satisfy legally mandated retention requirements, and 2) to preserve materials pertaining to the institution’s history and to the activities and achievements of its officers, faculty, staff, students, and alumni. Compared to institutional repositories, which aim to preserve the entire intellectual output of the institution, university archivists exercise broad discretion in determining which papers and other digital objects to collect and store. Still, the potential overlap of roles of the two repository types merits consideration at institutions that support both”. (6)

Whereas, Clifford A. Lynch described institutional repository as, “university-based institutional repository is a set of services that a university offers to the members of its community for the management and dissemination of digital materials created by the institution and its community members”. (5)

In other words, an institutional repository is a digital archive of the intellectual product created by the faculty, research scholars, and students of an institution and accessible to end users both within and outside of the institution, with few restricted item to access. It respond two strategic issues facing academic institutions: 1) they provide a central component in reforming scholarly communication by stimulating innovation in a publishing structure, and 2) they serve as tangible indicators of an institution’s quality, thus increasing its visibility, prestige, and public value. (6)

## 12. University Archive of University of North Bengal

University of North Bengal and its university library, established in 1962 have built up a balanced and rich collection on all branches of science, arts, commerce and management. It is a member of UGC Infonet Consortium for on line subscription of journals. Library LAN has become a part of campus wide network, which has made it possible for the academic community of various departments to access information from their adobe. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is the electronic version of the card catalogue. University library has created the database of its collection with the SOUL (Ver.2.0) Software under the INFLIBNET Programme.

The university archive of University of North Bengal was established in June 2008 at the university library is a repository of variety of materials. It is located on the second floor of the university library building. Its objectives is to collection, storing the preservation of official files, records, documents, publications and other materials of University of North Bengal that have significant value in tracking the history of the origin, growth, and development of the university.

The archive is directed by the director of university archive who is the librarian of university library. There is three skilled staff as human resource, engaged in collecting and storing of archival materials in this institute.

The archive established with some ICT infrastructure:

- ❖ Two HP Compaq dx2480 Business PC and UPS with LAN connection

- ❖ HP X86 Family 6 Model 15 Stepping 13 Genuine Intel 2394 MHZ, 2GB RAM, 160GB Hard Disk, 17" TFT Monitor, DVD R/W, 4 USB , Microsoft Windows XP Professional
- ❖ Internet connectivity
- ❖ One Canon iR2022N Model Network printer-copier with Scanner
- ❖ One HP Laser Printer
- ❖ CDs & Pen Drive
- ❖ Window-based operating system, MS Office, Acrobat Reader
- ❖ Word to PDF converter software, etc.

The archive collects university records of permanent historical value regardless of format in university system. The archive is used to create databases on minutes, proceedings, correspondence, reports, and publications produced by administrative, academic, and research units in the courses of university system. The archive is started its archival materials by converting in PDF image files format. The collection works is on going process. At this moment, total collection of materials is near about 1900 objects on:

- ◆ Proceedings of the Meetings,
- ◆ Proceedings of the Executive Council,
- ◆ Chancellor's Speech,
- ◆ Vice-Chancellor's Speech,
- ◆ Chief Guest's Speech,
- ◆ Minutes of the Court, Financial Committee,
- ◆ Annual Meeting of the Alumni,
- ◆ Annual Reports
- ◆ University News Bulletin,

- ◆ Annual Accounts,
- ◆ The Acts, Statutes, Ordinances, Regulation and Rules, Financial Rules,
- ◆ Departmental profile, etc.

Out of 1900 objects, we have already converted 1700 objects in PDF format.

Now, the archive is trying to enhance its collections. Open source software, DSpace will be installed to manage those archival materials for searching and access of digitized store documents for users of the university community faculty, officers, research scholars, staff, students, visitors and other individuals. We have tested the installation of DSpace software in linux platform and also create communities in DSpace. Communities may be created with many sub-communities as-

#### **University Archive**

##### **Registrar Branch Records**

Minutes of Executive Council 1962

Minutes of Executive Council 1963

##### **Finance Branch Records**

Minutes of Finance Committee 1962

Minutes of Finance Committee 1963

##### **Controller Branch Records**

Minutes of Meetings 1962

Minutes of Meetings 1963

##### **Inspector of Colleges Records**

Minutes of Meetings 1962

Minutes of Meetings 1963

##### **Library Records**

Minutes of Library Committee 1962

Minutes of Library Committee 1963

as so on.....

### 13. Conclusion

We may conclude that, there is an urgent need for building archival materials in digitalized format in the university archive to meet the needs of faculty, officers, research scholars and other users of the university community. Archival materials keeping are essential for further study or research purpose in a university community. So, we have responsibility for preserving the records in the university archive. Lastly, we suggest that UGC should provide some guidelines for developing university archive in each and every university also provide some financial assistance or grant for setting up university archive.

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