MODULE 19

INTRODUCING EAC–CPF

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Appendix B: Case Study

Incrementally Implementing EAC-CPF at the University of Illinois Archives

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In the main body of this module, Kathy Wisser makes an implicit recommendation: that archives reorient their descriptive practices, placing more effort on describing the organizations, people, and families who created records. This is good advice, and many archives can apply it by adapting their existing systems to take advantage of the possibilities that EAC-CPF affords. This case study describes one attempt to do just that, illustrating specific ways that context control was used to supplement traditional descriptive practices—practices set in place long before EAC-CPF was a gleam in anyone's eye.

Founded in 1963, the University of Illinois Archives includes 29,000 cubic feet and 15 terabytes of records and personal papers. These materials document the University; its faculty, staff and students; and some external organizations, including the American Library Association and the Advertising Council, whose archives are managed on contract. The Archives, in this sense, is a mixed repository, blending functions of an institutional archives and a manuscript repository.

Like many of the academic archives established in the 1960s and early 1970s, the University of Illinois Archives adopted a descriptive system that reflected then-current assumptions about best practice. Specifically, the Archives used a single hierarchy to aggregate records by the office that created them: the record group and subgroup system. Practices mandated that the record series would be our main unit of description, and each record series was assigned a classification number composed of the record group number, the subgroup number, and the series number under which a particular set of records was classified. For example, all materials in our record group 15 were created by someone acting on behalf of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences or one of its subordinate units, such as the Department of Classics. Those in subgroup 6 were in fact either official records of the Classics Department or the professional papers of a faculty member associated with it. Record series 15/6/1 was (and still is) the Department of

Classics Letterbooks; 15/6/20 was (and still is) the personal papers of former classics professor William Oldfather.

Like the Classics Letterbooks or the Oldfather Papers, each set of records in the Archives was provided a record series identifier, a title, and a description. And each record series—there were more than 5,000 of them by the late 1990s—was placed neatly into one and only one record group and subgroup.

It was not surprising that the Archives used such a system. Even in the 1970s and 1980s, it was described as particularly appropriate for institutional archives.[68] And rightly so. In a pre-computer age, the record group/subgroup system gave archivists a quick way to aggregate records by their issuing office. Archivists and users visiting the reference room could browse related records using a visible file (i.e., Kardex) or other index system.[69] It made sense for the time and offered a convenient way to deal with bulk and with resource constraints.
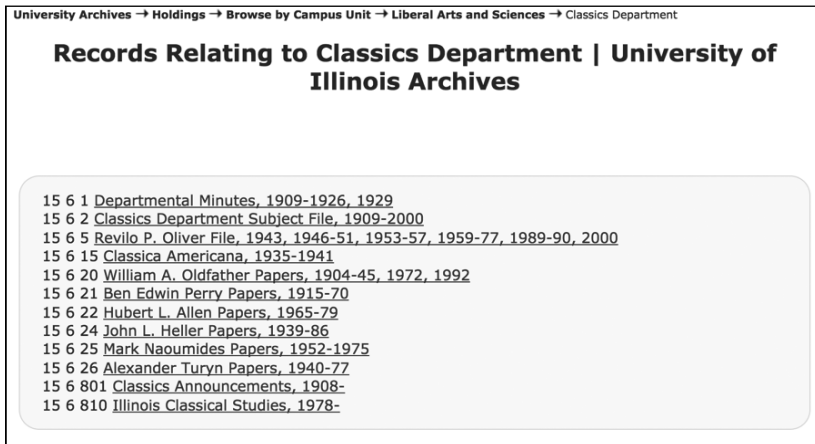
In the early 1970s, the University Archives input basic information for each record series (such as its record group number, subgroup number, and series identifier, as well as its cubic footage and the record series title) into a mainframe computer application. This automated the record and subgroup system, with each series description referencing a pair of key values/lookup tables.[70] Over time, the Archives' faculty members worked to enhance this PARADIGM system (as it was known), adding features like the ability to apply one or more controlled subject descriptors to each record series. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Archives supplemented PARADIGM with a few microcomputer-based systems. Although the new systems were not directly connected to the mainframe system, they tracked shelf locations (via an RBase database), narrative scope and contents notes (in structured WordPerfect files), folder inventories (in unstructured WordPerfect files), and campus unit histories (with WordPerfect, again). Taken as a whole, PARADIGM and the supplementary systems gave staff members and users the ability to search a range of printed outputs. Whether these outputs were consulted on printed "control cards,"

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68 Fredric M. Miller, *Arranging and Describing Archives and Manuscripts*, Archival Fundamentals Series (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1990), 13, 17, 27–28, https://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/22456382.html.

69 See American Office Solutions, Inc.'s website at http://www.recordsystems.net/index-kardex .html, captured at https://perma.cc/SS5V-ER9B.

70 William Maher, "Administering Archival Automation: Development of In-House Systems," *American Archivist* 47 (Fall 1984): 405–417, doi:10.17723/aarc.47.4.414470727557t585.

**Figure 9. Record Group and Subgroup System at
the University of Illinois Archives**

University Archives → Holdings → Browse by Campus Unit → Liberal Arts and Sciences → Classics Department

Records Relating to Classics Department | University of Illinois Archives

15 6 1 Departmental Minutes, 1909-1926, 1929
15 6 2 Classics Department Subject File, 1909-2000
15 6 5 Revilo P. Oliver File, 1943, 1946-51, 1953-57, 1959-77, 1989-90, 2000
15 6 15 Classica Americana, 1935-1941
15 6 20 William A. Oldfather Papers, 1904-45, 1972, 1992
15 6 21 Ben Edwin Perry Papers, 1915-70
15 6 22 Hubert L. Allen Papers, 1965-79
15 6 24 John L. Heller Papers, 1939-86
15 6 25 Mark Naoumides Papers, 1952-1975
15 6 26 Alexander Turyn Papers, 1940-77
15 6 801 Classics Announcements, 1908-
15 6 810 Illinois Classical Studies, 1978-

(i.e., 5-by-8-inch index cards stored in a flip file) as subject indices, as box lists, or as a location guide, each resource pointed implicitly or explicitly to the three-part record series number.

Before 2004, the record group system provided the Archives with its only form of automated context control related to the people or organizations responsible for creating or using records. Figure 9—a screenshot taken from the "Archon" application, which succeeded the mainframe and microcomputer-based systems described above—shows the limits of context control with the record group system.

By 2004, repository staff had come to realize that although this rough and ready classification system was easy to understand, it was not very flexible, complete, or accurate. When departments merged, changed names, or took a new reporting line, the system was too rigid; there was no way to record those changes. Staff members could not properly record or display information about current and predecessor bodies. No contextual information could be recorded about people or families—no biographical information, no name records, nothing other than the record group number.

In 2004, the prototype version of EAC-CPF offered an alternate way to record contextual information: by applying authority control and linking the authority records to collection description. At that time, the Archives took the first step toward EAC when a "creators" table was added to the Microsoft Access database we used at that time. Because the

"creators" were managed as separate rows in the database, they could be linked to one or more record series (i.e., collection-level) descriptions. Likewise, these relationships were reflected in print and web outputs.

In 2007, we moved further toward compliance with the prototype EAC-CPF standard. A practicum student created an authority file for each "creator": a name record for the person or campus unit responsible for the creation and use of a particular record series. These were either drawn from the Library of Congress Name Authority File and input in our database or constructed according to the rules provided in *Describing Archives: A Content Standard*. Each name file was then linked to each record series description and—where appropriate—to the record group or subgroup that it described.

The connection that we made between the name authority and the classification may seem like a dodge. Readers may reasonably ask why we did not simply abandon the record group/subgroup system, as Peter Scott and Max Evans recommended?[71]

The answer is simple and comes in three parts. First, the classification system was so deeply embedded in staff and user practices that it could not be excised easily. In practical terms, the classification numbers served as our collection identifiers, and we could scarcely afford to reassign each one in a new system, much less renumber tens of thousands of boxes. Second, linking the classification number to authority records added a key functionality: the ability to describe the various name and unit reporting changes that had taken place over the year. This was greatly facilitated when we imported existing administrative histories for each campus department—which students had written over many years—into the notes field attached to each creator record. Finally, we felt that over time, the record groups and subgroups might be repurposed. Instead of identifying units by name, perhaps they could describe a function. For example, Record Group 1, Board of Trustees, could be retitled "University Governance." By retaining the old record group and subgroup system, we hoped to incrementally move toward a functional classification such as that which was, at a later date, implemented by Marcus Robyns and Jason Woolman and which is now supported by the EAC-CPF relations area.[72]

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71 Scott, "Record Group Concept"; Evans, "Authority Control."

72 Marcus Robyns and Jason Woolman, "Institutional Functional Analysis at Northern Michigan University: A New Process of Appraisal and Arrangement of Archival Records," *American Archivist* 74 (Spring/Summer 2011): 241–256, doi:10.17723/aarc.74.1.v83414601u325512.

Figure 10. Linked Name Authority and Unit History in Collection-level Description

In 2009 we took further steps toward EAC-CPF implementation when we revised the public view of data contained in our Archon-based system. We improved the output to make contextual linkages clearer, to allow the linking of name authorities to digital objects, and to dynamically produce EAC-CPF records for each of the more than 2,000 name records in our system. Further revisions to the output were made in 2016, in anticipation of migration to ArchivesSpace or another system. Figures 10 and 11 are examples of the views and outputs that these changes allowed.

The steps taken in 2007 and 2009 allowed us to maintain a separate authority record and description for campus unit, person, family, or external organization who created the records that are found in the University of Illinois Archives. Overall, we found the EAC-CPF standard very easy to implement once we made a few underlying changes in our database, a happy consequence of the simple, functional approach conceptual model that the EAC-CPF uses (as illustrated in Figure 2). With about 20 hours of programming time, we were producing valid EAC-CPF records that included the required control header, a name record/identity area, a description, and <relations> links to the records in our system, both in the public output and in the EAC-CPF representation that is shown in Figure 12.

Figure 11. Authority Record with Links to Related Agents and Collections

*Note: Digital Object linkages are also supported but not shown in this record.

Figure 12. EAC-CPF Expression of Authority Record Shown in Figure 11

```
<?xml version="1.0" encoding="UTF-8"?>

<eac-cpf
    xmlns="urn:isbn:1-931666-33-4"
    xmlns:html="http://www.w3.org/1999/xhtml"
    xmlns:xlink="http://www.w3.org/1999/xlink"
    xmlns:xsi="http://www.w3.org/2001/XMLSchema-instance"
    xsi:schemaLocation="urn:isbn:1-931666-33-4 http://archives.
        library.illinois.edu/archon/packages/creators/lib/cpf.xsd
        " xml:lang="eng">

<control>
    <recordId>IU-Ar231</recordId>
    <maintenanceStatus>revised</maintenanceStatus>
    <maintenanceAgency>
```

```
            <agencyCode>IU-Ar</agencyCode>
            <agencyName>University of Illinois Archives
                </agencyName>
        </maintenanceAgency>
        <languageDeclaration>
            <language languageCode='eng'>English</language>
            <script scriptCode='Latn'>Latin</script>
        </languageDeclaration>
        <maintenanceHistory>
            <maintenanceEvent>
                <eventType>revised</eventType>
                <eventDateTime>Revision date is not currently
                    tracked in the database.</eventDateTime>
                <agentType>human</agentType>
                <agent>The name of the person who created this
                    record is not recorded.</agent>
            </maintenanceEvent>
        </maintenanceHistory>
    </control>

    <cpfDescription>
        <identity>
            <entityType>person</entityType>
            <nameEntry localType='nameAuthorized'>
                <part>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
                    Department of Classics</part>
            </nameEntry>
        </identity>

        <description>
            <biogHist>
            <p>The Department of the Latin Language and
                Literature and the Department of Greek Language
                and Literature became a part of the initial curricu-
                lum (1868) of the university.--1 In 1871, they were
                consolidated into the School of Ancient Languages
                and Literature within the College of Literature
                and Science.--2 In 1885, the university shortened
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the name of the school to the School of Ancient Languages and in 1891 placed it in the new College of Literature.--3 In 1893, the Department of Greek and the Department of Latin succeeded the School of Ancient Languages in the College of Literature (the College of Literature and Arts after 1894).--4 In 1905, the Board of Trustees, acting on the recommendation of the president, created the Department of Classics and authorized the naming of a head.--5 In 1913, the department became a part of the newly established College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.--6 Within this college it has been a part of the Division of Language and Literature from 1935 to 1945 and the Division of Humanities since 1945.--7 The department has added three areas of concentration to those of Greek and Latin. These are Classical Civilization (1965), Hebrew (1970) and Classical Archeology (1971).--8 The department offers degree programs through the Ph.D. level.</p>
<p>Notes</p>
<p>1. Circular and Catalog, 1868-69, p. 10.</p>
<p>2. Catalog and Circular, 1871-72, p. 25.</p>
<p>3. Catalog and Circular, 1885-86, p. 76; Catalog and Circular, 1891-92, p. 111.</p>
<p>4. Catalog and Circular, 1893-94, p. 72-73; Catalog and Circular, 1894-95, p. 23.</p>
<p>5. Board of Trustees Transactions, 23rd Report, June 2, 1905, p. 75.</p>
<p>6. Board of Trustees Transactions, 27th Report, July 5, 1912, p. 71; Annual Register, 1913-14, p. 155.</p>
<p>7. Board of Trustees Transactions, 38th Report, April 20, 1935, p. 162-63; Annual Register, 1945-46, p. 137.</p>
<p>8. Undergraduate Course Catalog, 1965-66, p. 55; Undergraduate Course Catalog, 1970-71, p. 72; Undergraduate Course Catalog, 1971-72, p. 77.</p>
</biogHist>
</description>

```
<relations>
<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='hierarchical-parent' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu
    /archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=16'>
<relationEntry>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
    College of Liberal Arts and Sciences</relationEntry>
    </cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois
    .edu/archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp
    ;id=1050'>
<relationEntry>Allen, Hubert Lee (1938-)</relationEntry>
<descriptiveNote><p>Faculty member of the classics
    department</p>
</descriptiveNote></cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu/
    archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=1052'>
<relationEntry>Heller, John Lewis (1906-1988)
    </relationEntry>
<descriptiveNote><p>Faculty member of the classics
    department</p>
</descriptiveNote></cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu
    /archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=1053'>
<relationEntry>Naoumides, Mark</relationEntry>
<descriptiveNote><p>Faculty member of the classics
    department</p>
</descriptiveNote></cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu
    /archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=1048'>
```

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<relationEntry>Oldfather, William Abbott (1880-1945)
    </relationEntry>
<descriptiveNote><p>Faculty member of the classics
    department</p>
</descriptiveNote>
</cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu
    /archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=1054'>
<relationEntry>Oliver, Revilo P. (Revilo Pendleton) (1910-)
    </relationEntry>
<descriptiveNote><p>Faculty member of the department
    </p>
</descriptiveNote></cpfRelation>

<cpfRelation cpfRelationType='associative' xlink:type
    ='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library.illinois.edu
    /archon/index.php?p=creators/creator&amp;id=1049'>
<relationEntry>Perry, Ben Edwin (1892-1968)</relationEntry>
    </cpfRelation>

<resourceRelation resourceRelationType='creatorOf'
    xlink:type='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library
    .illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard
    &amp;id=3785'>
<relationEntry localType='papers'>Classica Americana
    </relationEntry></resourceRelation>

<resourceRelation resourceRelationType='creatorOf'
    xlink:type='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library
    .illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard
    &amp;id=2420'>
<relationEntry localType='papers'>Classics Announcements
    </relationEntry></resourceRelation>

<resourceRelation resourceRelationType='creatorOf'
    xlink:type='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library
```

```
            .illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard
            &amp;id=9855'>
    <relationEntry localType='papers'>Classics Department
            Subject File</relationEntry></resourceRelation>

    <resourceRelation resourceRelationType='creatorOf'
            xlink:type='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library
            .illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard
            &amp;id=3784'>
    <relationEntry localType='papers'>Departmental Minutes
            </relationEntry></resourceRelation>

    <resourceRelation resourceRelationType='creatorOf'
            xlink:type='simple' xlink:href='http://archives.library
            .illinois.edu/archon/index.php?p=collections/controlcard
            &amp;id=2421'>
    <relationEntry localType='papers'>Illinois Classical Studies
            </relationEntry></resourceRelation>
    </relations>

 </cpfDescription>

 </eac-cpf>
```

In short, using context control and EAC-CPF helped us revitalize and reengineer our descriptive system. The intellectual challenges inherent in implementing the standard forced us to fundamentally rethink how we provide access to materials, including digital objects and electronic records. These challenges remain ongoing, and in the future we plan to take the following steps to further apply contextual description and improve access:

- Fully developing contextual links between record series, digital objects, and authority records. Creating and maintaining authority information and linking it to existing collections adds many time and resource requirements, and we are gradually building out the links while editing records in the system.

- Transitioning to ArchivesSpace or another content management system that allows for a richer expression of relationships between records, digital objects, and agents. For example, other systems allow agent records to be linked as a subject of a resource or digital object, but that capacity is not allowed in our current system.
- Applying the name authority file and contextual control in our new digital library application, which will allow a richer expression of relationships. In the course of implementing this new system, we will follow best practices for publishing linked open data, such as those provided by Aaron Rubinstein in *Module 20: Sharing Archival Metadata*.