

Manuscripts & Other Formats Discussion Group
Sunday, July 12, 2009
10:30 am-12:00 pm
Palmer House, LaSalle 3

Minutes

The Manuscripts and Other Formats Discussion Group attracted a crowd of nineteen attendees, who shared news of recent conferences and workshops, and also described new acquisitions. Among challenges posed by certain new acquisitions were collections including proprietary information maintained by active businesses, such as recipes, and court files maintained by a faculty member who routinely serves as an expert witness.

Attendees also took the opportunity to bring questions to the group. On the minds of colleagues are: reuniting dispersed manuscript collections through collaborative digitization projects; formalizing a process for determining an appropriate level of processing; serving unprocessed collections; and enhancing finding aids for already processed collections.

Attendees next tackled the subject of selecting not only content, but also potential partners for grant projects. This served as a nice segue into our primary discussion topic: More Product, Less Process, four years later. Attendees revealed they were in general hesitant to adopt Meissner and Greene's recommendations regarding staples, paper clips, and other metallic devices. They also observed that minimal processing may be more costly in the long run, if duplicative and superfluous material is retained, thereby eating up shelf space. Concerns were also raised about the possibility of sensitive data being overlooked during expedited processing. Finally, the meeting concluded with a brief look at the impact exposing hidden collections has had upon public services staff. One attendee observed that technical services has been "sexy" in the age of hidden collections, but public services has not garnered the same attention in recent years.

The meeting adjourned with one final announcement: there is an opening for a co-chair of this discussion group. Interested parties should contact either Lois Black or Deborah Leslie.