



PRESERVATION EDUCATION CURRICULUM



NORTHEAST DOCUMENT CONSERVATION CENTER

CLASS 13 LESSON PLAN

Building a Preservation Program

The Lesson

The instructor should gather various materials and handouts to complement the in-class lecture, discussions, and activities. Depending on the interests of the instructor and the emphasis to be placed on various elements of the lesson, materials that may be needed include:

- Sample preservation policies
- Sample preservation budget documents
- Sample grant proposals
- A variety of funder handbooks (IMLS, NEH, NHPRC)
- Sample preservation organization charts
- Literature or Web links on collaborative preservation efforts
- Literature or Web links on preservation advocacy campaigns
- Literature or Web links on preservation continuing education providers
- Literature or Web links on international preservation issues and resources

Part I: Preservation Planning, Budgeting, and Funding (65 minutes)

- A. Methods of determining preservation needs
- B. Discussion/review of model policies
- C. Discussion/review of sample budgets
- D. Discussion of funding sources and grant development

This initial portion of the class will review basic models (assessments, statistical reviews, etc.) for determining institutional preservation needs, a topic explored at much greater length in **Class 7: Surveys and Assessments**. In the discussion of short-term preservation goals and long-term preservation plans, the instructor should utilize the NEDCC preservation leaflets and review or refer to the planning tools available in Ogden's *Preservation Planning: Guidelines for Writing a Long-Range Plan*. Ask students what preservation policies they are familiar with (including food and drink policies in libraries, policies on return of damaged books, etc.), and make a list on the board to facilitate discussion. Paper copies or a set of Web links to model policies related to preservation (disaster plans, binding policies, collection development policies) should be provided.

Ask students about their experiences with preservation grants and budgets. The costs of the various components of a preservation program can be shown and described from copies of actual

preservation department budgets (or realistic mock-ups). A discussion of the difference in strategy, sources, time lines, and methods between grant writing and fund-raising can be made; lists of top funders (federal, state, and foundation sources) should be provided to students, as well as sample grants, if possible. Throughout this portion of the class, and throughout the entire lesson, emphasize the concept of “collections as assets” to the library, its audience, and its wider community.

In-Class Activity

- Divide students into groups and provide copies of one or more model policies related to preservation for each group to compare and critique. What elements of the policies are effective? How might they be improved?

Part II: Personnel (25 minutes)

- A. Preservation program staffing models
- B. Preservation career paths

Personnel costs have long been a large component of the preservation program budget. The organization and management of preservation programs, especially detailed in the Merrill-Oldham, Morrow, Roosa publication, should be reviewed. Students can discuss the staffing levels for preservation at their own institutions. The career paths of preservation staff could be included as a discussion point in this section.

In-Class Activity

- Divide students into groups and provide “snapshot” documents from the late 1980s, mid-1990s, and the present time for them to compare. Students should discuss which preservation program components have remained important over a long period of time, and which have grown or waned, then report their discussions to the class.

Part III: Collaboration in Preservation (25 minutes)

- A. Definitions of collaboration
- B. Discussion of collaborative preservation programs and review of Web sites
- C. Discussion of local collaborations

The importance of collaboration in preservation—whether to gain funds or to move programmatic activities forward—has never been greater. Students will gain insights into the ways in which collaborative efforts work through a study of the benefits and drawbacks of collaboration in traditional preservation and digital activities, including a review of key efforts such as the California Preservation Program, Regional Alliance for Preservation, and the Colorado Digitization Program. Instructors should pull up the Web sites for each of the collaborative efforts mentioned above, as well as other efforts in the local, state, or regional area where the class is being offered.

In-Class Activity

- Using a case study or real-life example, have students brainstorm ideas for a collaborative preservation project. What would the primary components of the project be? How would it

benefit the institutions involved? How would it be funded? What challenges might need to be overcome to make it succeed?

Part IV: Advocacy and Continuing Education (35 minutes)

- A. General review of one or two preservation advocacy campaigns
- B. Preservation advocacy case study
- C. Comparison of preservation advocacy to other movements
- D. Continuing education sources

Advocacy and awareness raising in preservation have grown in importance in the past 25 to 30 years. By looking at institutional programs—including activities such as user education literature and classes—as well as local, regional, national, and government-sponsored preservation advocacy “campaigns,” students can learn the importance of “marketing preservation” on many levels. A case study in advocacy —focusing on issues such as alkaline paper, for instance—can illustrate the origin and advancement of a preservation “movement.” To further illustrate the notion of advocacy, discussion of library and archival preservation in comparison with the worldwide ecological and environmental movements and the importance of preservation in a time of great change, upheaval, and disaster can provide a stirring way to close the lesson and the semester. At the end of this section, handouts on continuing education resources in preservation, and professional organizations with preservation interests, can be distributed (if they were not already distributed in Class 1).

In-Class Activity

- Have students divide into groups and identify areas where they think preservation advocacy is needed, and then report back to the class.

Part V: Preservation Research and International Preservation Issues (30 minutes)

- A. Discussion of key international preservation issues
- B. Description of international preservation resources
- C. Highlight current preservation research topics

The building blocks of a preservation program—from planning to budgeting to staffing, then collaboration and advocacy as described above—have international components as well. Ask students what international preservation resources and concepts they are familiar with, to lead into a review and discussion of key international preservation activities (such as International Blue Shield efforts to protect cultural materials in wartime, and new developments in paper conservation techniques). The top international preservation resources can be briefly reviewed or covered in a handout in this part of the lesson. Finally, to draw the class to a close, the “new frontiers” of preservation, evident in preservation research of topics such as mass deacidification, accelerated aging, and research on the preservation of nonpaper-based materials (CDs, PDF and other formats) will be covered, as well as a brief history of how many preservation practices today resulted from past research. Handouts for this part of the class include an annotated listing of research and standards-making institutions in the preservation field.

Suggested Graded Assignments

- Before class, send groups of students to different types of libraries and/or archives. Provide each group with the same questions to ask of staff about funding, staffing, and the like, and have

them report back to the class. This should be prearranged with preservation administrators at the various institutions.

Suggested Term Projects

- Develop a full-scale preservation plan for the student's home institution or an institution of interest.
- Develop a grant proposal for the student's workplace or a local institution of interest. A Preservation Assistance Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities would be an appropriate length for the proposal and helpful to the home institution.
- Develop a local or regional advocacy campaign for preservation related to "bigger-picture" issues.
- Write a term paper on a case study of a collaborative effort with suggestions for future directions for the collaborative group.
- Identify a research topic of interest to the student, and write a term paper that provides an overview of current research efforts in that topic.