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LACUNY Archives and Special Collections Roundtable Meeting Minutes, April 2004

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LACUNY Archives and Special Collections Roundtable
Minutes for April 30, 2004
The meeting began at 2:15 PM.

In attendance:

Stephen Barto, Queens; Ellen Belcher, John Jay; William Casari, Hostos;
Douglas DiCarlo, LaGuardia. LaGuardia and Wagner Archives; Caroline
Fuchs, CUNY Graduate Center; Julio L. Hernandez-Delgado, Hunter; Janet
Butler Munch, Lehman; Keith Muchowski, City Tech; Sandra Roff, Baruch;
Kenneth Schlesinger, LaGuardia; Marie C. Spina, LaGuardia; Leo Theinert,
BMCC; Sydney Van Nort, City College

Observing were GSLIS (Queens College) Graduate School students and
LaGuardia Community College Library interns Tom Alcroft and Dan Ma

Sydney Van Nort of City College spoke about the archives at City
College. She noted the need of archives in general to justify their
existence and the role that archives play in an institution's public
relations. She said that the most frequent requests at City College are
for course catalogs/bulletins and alumni biographical information. She
said that at the vertical file and ?throwaway collection? have also
proved useful. She also advised that the structure of archives services
should reflect the administrative organization structure of institution.

Sandra Roff of Baruch spoke next and stressed the importance of CUNY
archivists to think of CUNY in general, not just one's individual
collection. As an example, it may be possible to digitize items and put
them on the CUNY portal. Doing more things online is also something to
think about, but there are numerous issues to think about, such as
copyright control. Sandra addressed issues of space and the importance
of space planning.

Julio Luis Hernandez-Delgado spoke third and gave an overview of the
archives at Hunter College. He noted that unlike what occurs at other
CUNY colleges, the archives are an institutional repository. The
archives do have part-timers and active volunteers, but no permanent
staff. He noted that the archives website is now up and running and that
he would like to put more finding aids online.

After these overviews the roundtable had a general discussion. Janet
Butler Munch said she hoped that more items from CUNY archives and
special collections could be put on CUNY +. She also spoke about
traveling grants. Preserving email archivally is another important issue
that remains to be resolved. She advised the novel idea of printing them
out! There was general agreement about paper copy being best solution,
despite the fact that some member had investigated management of
electronic records. Some members were trying to preserve digital copies
in e-mail archives or with use of software such as sang-it which can
copy and save Web based images or entire WEB files. The problem with
those programs is long term support and the fact that the images can be
edited before saving to other files thereby bringing authenticity into
question.

There was a lively debate about how deeply CUNY archivists want to
become involved in records management. The general consensus was that
this was an issue that needed to be addressed CUNY-wide. There was also
consensus that we had neither sufficient staffing nor long range storage
for this.

Steve Barto, Sandra Roff and other long term archivists discusses the
lengthy report Steve brought to the meeting. There is renewed interest
in re-examing the voluminous study made several years ago. Some of the
Roundtable member had never heard about the study on retention and
records. Excerpts were distributed and a full copy was left with M.

Spina for LaGuardia Institutional Archives

The roundtable then discussed future business and possible action items. These included a) examining the gift agreements, donor agreements, and collection development policies from participating members, b) possibly issuing a statement from the roundtable on records management, c) drafting an outline/overview of a possible retention schedule, d) enhancing publicity.

There was also a discussion of possible creating a roundtable listserv, writing regular columns in CUNY Matters, and the possibility of staging a public event in Fall 2004.

The idea of a listserv was rejected for the immediate future because of time constraints.

Sandra Roff and JulioHernandez developed an idea of a possible regular archive column in CUNY Matters. Based on the reader base, this was felt to be an excellent forum for increasing the visibility of archival collections. It could perhaps also move CUNY to increase its recognition and support of the various university-wide archives. Sandra Roff agreed to contact the editors and see if they would be amenable.

It was decided to distribute minutes electronically and to schedule the next meeting for mid-June. Ms Roff will report on CUNY Matters. Roundtable members will prepare to share forms and procedures for their collections electronically at next meeting. There was also some interest in exploring cooperative buying and trading opportunities.

Discussion from Medgar Evers and Hostos and other locations indicated much support in needed to guide Archivists in collection building and other basic issues.

It was proposed that acquisitions policy and use forms be a subject of next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 PM.