

Political Papers Archivist

The University Archives and Special Collections unit of Cowles Library is responsible for curating a collection of political papers from Senator Tom Harkin following his retirement from the United States Senate. In collaboration with the newly established Harkin Institute for Public Policy and Citizen Engagement at Drake University, the collection will support research and education efforts in public policy. The collection will comprise more than 1,500 boxes of print materials and approximately 15 terabytes of digital data as well as photographs and memorabilia.

The collection will be housed in a new, archival space in Cowles Library renovated during the summer of 2012. The 6,000 square foot area includes 1,500 square feet of office, reading and digitization workspace and 4,500 square feet of environmentally controlled collections space, equipped with high-density archival shelving.

The newly created position of Political Papers Archivist will have primary responsibility for ongoing accession, description, conservation, cataloging and digitization of the collection. General responsibilities will include working with Library and University faculty to ensure connection of the collection to the University curriculum and with the Harkin Institute to coordinate and support key areas of research and focus such as:

- People with Disabilities
- Economic Policy
- Education and Health
- Agriculture and Rural Communities
- Human Rights
- Science and Technology

Cowles Library's University Archives and Special Collections unit participates in the three major programmatic emphases of the Library: Knowledge, Learning and Community. The unit curates and develops unique collections related to the history of Drake University and the surrounding community, people and events that have shaped the University, the city of Des Moines and the state of Iowa. These collections are integrated into the Drake curriculum and made available to researchers in support of the Library's overall mission. The Library supports the educational goals of Drake University by providing services, collections, technology and learning opportunities that make it possible for faculty and students to successfully access, use and create scholarly information.

Position Description

Under the joint supervision of the Library Dean and Digital Initiatives Coordinator, the Political Papers Archivist holds primary responsibility for all activities connected with

the Senator Tom Harkin Special Collection within the University Archives and Special Collections.

30% Collection Management & Development

Accession and processing of papers, manuscripts, photographs and digital materials contained in the Harkin Special Collection, as well as collateral collections in accordance with accepted principles and practices. Manage the collection stacks space to insure proper environmental conditions and security practices. Develop clear location registers, finding aids, and complete and accurate descriptions of materials within the collection. Develop and identify preservation and conservation needs. Develop assessment criteria and report those assessments and statistics on a regular basis. Respond to information requests and assist researchers. Establish reading room policies for collection materials.

15 % Digitization and Special Collections Activities

Work with the Library's Digital Projects Librarian to curate existing and develop new digital objects in the Harkin and related collections. Establish priorities, workflows and assessment mechanisms for additional collection digitization activities. Assume primary responsibility for the Harkin Collection's web presence including an online repository, web-based home pages and web exhibits. Provide University Archives and Special Collections personnel consultation, training and guidance in best practices for all collections and activities within the unit.

15% Curricular Engagement

Support teaching and research activities within the Drake curriculum through collaboration with librarians and University faculty. On a phased-in basis, develop and teach at least one First Year Seminar or library course related to archival practice, primary source research or topics related to the Harkin Collection. Outreach to University faculty to encourage the use of materials from the Collection in their courses.

15% Collaboration with the Harkin Institute

Coordinate exhibits and provide relevant materials in collaboration with the ongoing activities of the Harkin Institute for Public Policy and Citizen Engagement.

10% Research and Scholarship

Engage in research and activities related to the collection such as authorship, professional conference presentations, public speaking, and scholarly collaboration.

10% Community Outreach and Grant Writing

Conduct community outreach to civic, business, and other organizations to promote awareness and support of the Collection. Work with the University's Sponsored Programs unit and the Harkin Institute where appropriate to secure grants, donations and gifts that strengthen and promote the Collection and the University Archives and Special Collections missions.

5% Supervision

Train and supervise student employees to assume appropriate responsibilities related to digitization and collection materials. Develop, hire, train and supervise Undergraduate Assistant positions, paid Undergraduate or Graduate internships positions. Share supervisory responsibilities for a full-time staff archival assistant position.

Required Qualifications

- Master's degree or higher from an ALA-accredited program either with a concentration in archives management or demonstrated experience in archives and special collections
- Experience or extensive course work in archival processing, description, and preservation
- Fluency with relevant standards for archival description, including DACS, EAD, Dublin Core
- Knowledge and/or experience with current library and digitization technologies and standards
- Experience with teaching a class, giving presentations, or leading tours
- Demonstrated excellent interpersonal and communication skills (both written and oral)
- Ability to work independently, and creatively, collaboratively, and effectively as a team member
- Ability to perform physical activities associated with archival environments
- Demonstrated strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion in higher education

Desired Qualifications

- Experience in processing large 20th century political collections
- Advanced degree in political science, history, public policy or related field
- Experience with the Archival Management System (Archon/Archivist's Toolkit/ASpace) and ContentDM
- Demonstrated ability to manage processing projects
- Experience working with audiovisual collections
- Familiarity or expertise with one or more policy areas contained in the Harkin Collection (e.g. People with disabilities, Agriculture and rural communities, International human rights and development, Education, etc.)